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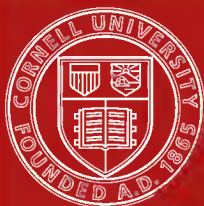
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# THE SHANS

VOLUME I

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## NOTES

My thanks are due to Mr. Taw Sein Ko for wading patiently through my stream of scribbling. He landed safely with this generous observation: "Your work is a most valuable one, and sheds a great deal of light on the ancient history of Burma." It is only fair to add that the value of my work (whatever it may be) is due, in no small measure, to the corrections, information and helpful suggestions which he himself has most kindly given me. My thanks are due also to Dr. L. Scherman of Munich and to Mrs. Leslie Milne for nearly all of the photographs which adorn and brighten my duller pages.

There are aspirated initial consonants represented by one letter in the Shan, for which there are no equivalents either in the English sounds or in the English alphabet. In official orthography, the aspiration is represented by an *h*, as *hk*, *hp*, *hs* and *ht*. All of these are phonetic impossibilities. It would be as easy to propel a cannon ball with the gun-cotton ahead of it as to explode an aspirated *k* with the wind in the lead. An *h* after the initial consonant would also have been objectionable. Take, for instance, the Shan name for the Siamese, sometimes written "Thai" (in English). Any Englishman, not familiar with the Shan aspirates, would be sure to pronounce it "Thigh," which would make a Siamese squirm. That actually happened in my office a few days ago. Phonetically, it would have been much better to have represented this aspiration by an "exalted comma" or by some other diacritical mark. In writing of matters and things in this province, the official orthography has been followed; to have done otherwise would have led to confusion, and smacked of pedantry.



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## INTRODUCTION

APPARENTLY at the instance of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, in general, and of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, in particular, a series of monographs is in course of preparation, presumably on all of the races and tribes of the Indian Empire. This book is one of the series, written at the request of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma.

The Shans, as we may see from the quotations below, are a people numerous, widely spread, and with a history reaching back far into the past. Manifestly, in writing a monograph on the Shans, these facts must be taken into account. The subject cannot be treated in exactly the same way that one might write of a small tribe of the Melchizedec order, "without father, without mother, without genealogy," whether that tribe be a recent intruder or the ragged relic of a vanishing race. Certain matters and things must be looked at from the historical point of view somewhat more than is common in purely anthropological accounts of small tribes. But, after all, human history is only another name for anthropology written large. To conceive of history, as some writers have done, as though it were merely a record of wars and devastations, of political conditions and dynastic changes, is a misuse, if not an abuse, of the word. No definite lines can be drawn between the two. Religion, for instance, may come very properly under anthropology, but religion is one of the most important and determinative things in the history of the life and development of any people. Professor Rauschenbusch is certainly correct in saying that "the religious spirit is a factor of incalculable power in the making of history."\* The two volumes into which this work will be divided may, for convenience, be distinguished as "Historical" and "Anthropological" respectively, but in subject-matter they overlap and present no such clear lines of distinction.

\* *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, Introduction, p. xii.

It is doubtless both intended and desirable that this book should confine itself largely to the Shans of Burma, but it will be necessary to go far afield and botanize in other forests to explain the presence of this particular flower in these Shan Hills. To indicate who the Shans are and where they are at the present time, it may not be amiss to slip in here a few paragraphs from well-known writers. Though these quotations are familiar to us all, it may be handy to have them here for ready reference. Moreover, if the following pages are read in the light of these facts, it may help in removing obscurities and in giving at least plausibility to statements that otherwise might seem unreasonable or far-fetched. A people so numerous and so widely spread in these days of their decadence could not, in their palmy days, have been hidden away in the pocket of some lonely mountain, as the young of a marsupial are carried in their mother's pouch.

Of the Shans in general Mr. Hallett says: "Not only do they stretch away far to the eastward, perhaps as far as the China Sea, but they actually form one of the chief ingredients that compose the so-called Chinese race. Mr. Colquhoun, in his journey through the south of China, came to the conclusion that most of the aborigines whom he met, although known to the Chinese by various nicknames, were Shans; and that their propinquity to the Chinese was slowly changing their habits, manners and dress, and gradually incorporating them with that people. From Kwangtung and Kawnhsi the same race is found, called by the Anamites Muongs, spread throughout the hilly regions of Tonquin; and should the French, in pursuit of the Black Flags, enter the forests, they will find themselves, wherever they go, amongst the Shans." \*

From that high authority, Major Davies, more than one paragraph may be taken. He says: "The Shans are an extremely numerous and widely spread race. To the west they extend into Assam. In fact, in the thirteenth century A.D. they conquered that country, but have to a great extent become merged in the Hindu population, though there are still some communities of them who speak the Shan language. In Kham-ti, at the source of the western branch

\* *Historical Sketch of the Shans.*



of the Irrawaddy, is another isolated group of the Shan race, and there are also Shans on the upper course of the Chindwin River.

"Coming further east, the plains of Burma, north of about lat.  $23^{\circ}$ , are chiefly inhabited by men of Shan race, who in some districts are taking to talking the Burmese language. Further east still are the Shan States, where the ruling population is Shan, and from here they have spread southwards into Siam, for the Siamese are merely a southern offshoot of the Shans, and the name *Siam* is probably a variation of the name given to them by the Burmese and other races.

"Northwards the Shans do not in Yünnan now spread very far, and there are no great numbers of them north of lat.  $25^{\circ}$ . Still they do exist north of that line, for they are to be found on the Yangtse and its tributaries in the part of that river which forms the boundary between Yünnan and Ssu-ch'uan. I have also come across a few of this race further north than this, near Pe-tiao on the Ya-lung River, about lat.  $28^{\circ} 5'$ , long.  $101^{\circ} 30'$ .

"In the east there can be no doubt that considerable numbers of Shans are to be found in the provinces of Kuei-chou, Kuang-hsi and Kuang-tung. In fact in some parts of Kuang-hsi they probably form the greater part of the population. Exactly how far east the Shan race now extends is a question that there is not information enough to decide. It is probable that they at one time inhabited a greater part of China south of the Yangtse, but many of them have now been absorbed by the Chinese. The physical resemblance between the Shan and the Cantonese Chinaman is remarkable, and it seems likely that the latter is chiefly Shan in blood, though now pretty thoroughly imbued with Chinese customs and ways of thought."

To show how widely scattered the Shans were, this may be taken from page 95 of Major Davies' valuable book: "The next day we passed through the little village of Man-mu (in south-western Yünnan) which is inhabited by Shans who came here from the province of Chiang-hsi seven generations ago. Their language is distinctly Shan, but it is

a peculiar dialect and they have some difficulty in making themselves understood by the others of their race in the neighbourhood. They say they do not know why they came here and that they are the only Chiang-hsi Shans in this part of the country. But they are quite positive that they did come from Chiang-hsi, which they describe as being three months' journey away."\*

This substantiates what Sir George Scott says in the *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States*: "The Tai (Shan) race is the most widely distributed in Indo-China. The Ahoms of Assam are indisputably Shan, though they are completely Hinduized. The Hakkas of Canton are almost certainly of Shan extraction, though they would be the first to deny it. . . . It seems probable that the Tai form a large part of the population of four of the Chinese provinces."

Dr. W. Clifton Dodd, of the American Presbyterian Mission of northern Siam, who went on a tour of inspection through south-western China in 1910, quotes Mr. Jameison, the British Consul-General at Canton, as saying that "the whole of Kuang-hsi and Kuang-tung provinces are Tai, ethnologically and linguistically," evidently meaning that the Tai (Shan) race and the Tai speech were predominant. Dr. Dodd also quotes Mr. F. D. A. Bourne, formerly His Britannic Majesty's Consular Agent at Chungking, Kuei-chow province, as saying, "Even now (1888) nine-tenths of the population of Nanning prefectures are Tai. . . . None of the women could speak Chinese. The Lolos are mere stragglers among a Tai population. . . . A large part of Kuang-hsi is governed by Tai chiefs, who are responsible for the good behaviour of their people. From Pongai down to Nanning Fu the whole population is Tai, speaking their own language, and governed for the most part by hereditary chiefs."†

Mr. Freeman, Dr. Dodd's associate, was at the same time making a tour through Tongking and south-western China. Of Mr. Freeman's findings, the latter says: "He

\* *Yünnan : The Link between India and the Yangtse.*

† From a Report in the *Parliamentary Blue-book* for 1888.

reports three-fourths of Tongking as Tai territory, and declares that, under various names, they occupy much of Kuang-hsi and Kuei-chou provinces and eastern Yünnan; and that these illiterate, non-Buddhist Tai are akin to other Tai people in Kuang-tung, and also to the Loi of Hainan." This authority further states that the Rev. Burkwall, agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, who had personally and through his colporters come into wide contact with the Tai of Kuang-hsi, confirmed the reports that the Tai of that province, in many rural districts, were ruled by hereditary chiefs, did not speak Chinese, and were so clannish that they did not take kindly to Chinese culture. According to Major Davies, the Chinese of Yünnan themselves affirm that the so-called Chinese of Kuang-tung are Shans. Dr. Dodd also quotes Dr. J. C. Gibson of Swatow as saying that the Hakkas and other tribes in that region were non-Chinese and, in his belief, were Tai (Shan).

Coming back nearer home, this may be taken from Captain Forbes: "The national appellation of Tai is that used by all branches of the (Shan) race except the Siamese who aspirate the word (into T'ai), giving it the signification of 'Free.' The Tai race, under several local tribal names, but always one and the same people, occupies a far wider range than any other in the Indo-Chinese peninsula. In Assam, known as Ahoms, along the borders of Burma and China, it is divided into numerous and semi-independent clans bearing in Burmese the generic name of Shans. Stretching southward, the same race, under the name of Laos, occupies the country between the Salween and the Mekong (Me-k'awng) rivers, while still further south, the best known and most civilized branch of the race, the Siamese, has founded a powerful maritime kingdom." \*

This is in general correct, but that "the national appellation of Tai" (or T'ai) was ever used by all branches of the race is open to question. Colonel Gerini asserts that "it was only after their successful career of conquest in the northern parts of Siam and in Burma that they (the Shans) adopted the title of Tai in order to distinguish and exalt

\* *The Languages of Further India*, p. 77.

themselves." Continuing he says: "The racial name of this people was Lao, and Thai (Tai) was simply a title that they substituted for that name."\* This can scarcely be more than an inference on the part of the learned Colonel and is open to doubt. That "Lao" was ever used as a generic name by all the Shans is not assured. The Shans have now at least a score of tribal names, and seem to have had several when first mentioned in Chinese legendary history. Even then they had already come far on the march of development and had doubtless split up into tribes of distinctive names who had long since forgotten what their racial name was, if they ever had one that covered all their clans. There are indications in northern Shan history that the name of Tai was used by this race before they entered upon any "successful career of conquest in Siam and Burma." The Shans were the regnant race over wide areas and for long periods of time before they distinguished themselves in Burma. Neither is it assured that Tai really means "The Free." The Tais or Shans were freemen as contrasted with the K'as or subject hill-tribes, and it may be from this fact that the theory arose. If Tai means "Free," it is remarkable that the Shans of eastern Burma and beyond know nothing of it. They stoutly deny that the word ever had such a meaning at all.†

\* See *Directory for Bangkok and Siam*, 1910.

† In this connection, Mr. Taw Sein Ko writes: "There are so many Chinese derivatives in Shan, which are attributed to a Cantonese source, that I feel warranted to say that Tai is derived from the Cantonese dialect of the Chinese language. Tai, in Cantonese, which is equivalent to Ta, in Yünnanese, means *great*. I have secured a copy of the history of Nan-chao in Chinese, and, in it, I find that, in the seventh to the eleventh centuries of the Christian era, the Shans had six kingdoms, whose names all begin with Ta or Tai, meaning *great*. They are Ta-Mōng-Kuo, Ta-chang-ho-kuo, Ta-t'ion-hsing-kuo, Ta-yi-ning-kuo, Ta-li-kuo and Ta-chung-kuo. They were founded respectively in the years 650, 903, 928, 929, 938 and 1095 A.D. There is a great probability, almost amounting to certainty, that, to the surrounding tribes including the Mons in China, the Shans were known by the appellation of Ta, in Yünnanese, and Tai, in Cantonese, which forms the first syllable of the names of their six principal kingdoms."

Since one of the old names for the Shans was Yaü, meaning *great*, and Tai is the exact equivalent, this history of the name is acceptable.

As a brief description of the physical features of the western strip of Shan country nothing better can be found or made than that given by Sir George Scott. He says : "The country between Assam and China is the point from which a number of great rivers start southwards in parallel courses, at first in a very narrow span of longitude, and afterwards spreading out into a fan which covers the country from the Yellow Sea to the Bay of Bengal. They all run in deep narrow rifts, and the ridges which separate them continue to run southwards almost as far as the rivers themselves and in chains almost as sharply defined as the river channels. These mountain ranges widen out as the river valleys widen and lose their height as tributary streams break them up into herring-bone spines and spurs, but they still preserve the same north and south direction, though here and there they re-enter and form the series of flat-bottomed valleys, or wide straths, which make up the Shan States. Of all the rivers, the Salween most steadily preserves its original character, and flows swiftly through a deep narrow gorge, between high ranges from its source till it reaches the plain land, which it has itself piled up over the sea in the course of ages.

"The Salween runs nearly through the centre of the British Shan States and they are situated towards the fringe and nearly in the centre of the fan, which has for its ribs the Brahmaputra, the Irrawaddy, the Salween, the Me-k'awng and the Yangtse. The Salween with its mountain banks has always formed a serious barrier, so that the branches of the Tai race on either side differ in dialect, in name, and even in written character, but their general features differ no more than the appearance of the country, which is simply a plateau roughened by mountain chains splitting up and running into one another, while still preserving their north and south tendency. The general height of the plateau is between 2,000 and 3,000 feet, but the cross ridges and the drainage cut it up into a series of valleys or plains, some long and narrow, some rounded like a cup, some flattened like a saucer, some extensive enough to suggest the Irrawaddy valley on a small scale. It is no doubt this physical

character of the country which has affected the national character and has prevented the Tai from living at peace with one another and uniting to resist the encroachments of ambitious neighbours. It also made obvious and easy for the conqueror the old maxim *divide et impera*, the more so since the hills everywhere are inhabited by various tribes all more or less wild. The Tai are seldom found away from the alluvial basins and do not look upon themselves as a hill people at all." \*

It is impossible at the present time to get at the exact number of Shans in Indo-China. The census for 1911 gives the total population of the Shan States as 1,359,154, of whom 996,420 are Shans, or one million in round numbers. Outside of the Shan States there are in Burma many Shan settlements, from far away Mergui in the south to farther away Kham-ti in the north. Very considerable settlements may be found in Thatôn, near Rangoon, at Toungoo and Pyinmana, and in other places; some of these may be descendants of Shan communities in the days of Wareru, of whom more may be said later on; more are comparatively recent comers who fled from various Shan states to escape from Burman misrule and exactions to find protection under a more just and stable government under the British Raj. In the basin of the Irrawaddy, from Katha to Myitkyina, the population is still very largely Shan in race, though many of these Shans have taken to Burman dress and to Burman speech, yet any man familiar with the Shan language would be surprised, if he should visit the people in their homes, to find how many of them are still using the Shan language; besides these there are numerous recent Shan settlements near Bhamo and in the valley of the Taping River. In the old state of Mogaung and along the Chindwin the Shans have by no means disappeared, though they are but a small remnant of once large populations.

The same is true of Kham-ti, though the exodus of the Shans may now be arrested by British administration and protection. As the Ahom Shans of Assam are now largely

\* *The Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States.*

returned in census reports as Hindus, their real number is a matter of conjecture, excepting only the comparatively recent Shan settlements there of Shan refugees from the Upper Chindwin and the Kham-ti valleys. A total of two hundred thousand, or perhaps a quarter of a million, may be a moderate figure for the whole batch. The Shans of Siam proper are given at five million, and the Laos of northern Siam at three and a half million, or a total of eight and a half million for Siam. Two million of Shans is supposed to be a conservative estimate of their numbers in the French state of Tongking. Dr. Dodd and Mr. Freeman, already mentioned, say: "Roman Catholics assert that nearly one-half of the population in areas (of south-western China) that total twenty million are Tai." "All authorities," they add, "concede that the Catholic fathers know southern China." If such claims as "the whole of Kuang-hsi and Kuang-tung provinces are Tai, ethnologically and linguistically," are even approximately correct, from seven to eight million would be a conservative estimate for the number of Shans in south-western China. If the smaller figure be used, this would give us a total of eighteen and three-fourths million for the whole of Indo-China. This does not take into account the millions of Hakkas who would not own that they are Shans, though the name is written large upon their faces, or of other millions of Chinamen of southern China who are largely Shan by race, but have adopted Chinese speech and customs; just as other millions in northern China are Tartars with a Chinese veneer, and who also are ashamed to confess it. If the higher figure of the Catholic fathers be accepted, it would round out a full twenty million of Shans for Indo-China, and still have a few left over for good measure. Some of these figures are scarcely more than conjectures; but it is safe to say that the Shans, in the Indo-Chinese peninsula, outnumber the Burmans two to one; that they outnumber the population of British North America three to one; of Australia five to one; and of Cape Colony ten to one. There are about four times as many Shans as there are people in either Portugal, Holland, Turkey (before the late war), or Sweden; and about ten

times as many as there are in Greece, Norway or Denmark. This is the remnant that remains of the Shans, notwithstanding that more millions of them have probably been absorbed into the so-called Chinese race, south of the Yangtse, than of all other racial elements combined. This has had a mighty influence upon the Chinese race, upon the Chinese language, upon the Chinese religion, and upon the Chinese characteristics. The Shans are worth studying.



# THE SHANS

## THE ORIGIN OF THE SHANS

### I.—CONDITIONS IN GENERAL

As a matter of fact, we know nothing of the origin of any race. What we do know, or think we know, as the case may be, is a certain or uncertain point in the line of its development. Take the Chinese, for instance. They who profess to know tell us that the Chinese came from some uncertain point in central or western Asia, at some unknown time, perhaps four thousand five hundred years ago, and settled at a given point near the Yellow River; that even in the basin of that river they were surrounded by barbarians whom it took them many centuries to drive out or to assimilate. Now, allowing that all this is true, we have by no means found the origin of the Chinese race.\* We have merely retraced the footprints on their line of march back to an uncertain encampment. If we could put ourselves back five thousand years to that undesignated spot in central or western Asia, we might still ask with the same pertinence, Where did you come from? What was your origin? Moreover, the question would doubtless be just as hard to answer as it is now, and compel us to go back another five thousand years with similar results.

A lover of race history and learned investigator† sat down snugly and declared that he had found the cradle (of course the original cradle) of the Shan race. He bids

\* Dr. C. J. Ball of Oxford, in his recent work, *Chinese and Sumerian*, seems to prove conclusively the Sumerian origin of the Chinese "Ku Wen Forms" in writing.

† M. Terrien de LaCouperie, *Cradle of the Shan Race*.

us, as it were, to sit down with him and watch it gently sway on the branch of a tree in a certain range of mountains, and listen to the soft croonings of the mother's lullaby. This is all very fine, in so far as it goes; but when we look round and ask, Where did its mother come from? Where did she learn that plaintive song? Where is daddy? Where did he come from, before he settled here to shoot partridges for the pot? then we find that we have not found the original cradle, but another, possibly far down the line of race development. The original cradle changed to dust several thousands of years before, under other skies, in some distant and unknown land—for aught that we know or can now ascertain. Of course it would be easy to use big words, like Aborigines and Autochthones, like pot-lids, to hide the steaming broth of our ignorance; but what does it all amount to when it is done? Still it is worth while to trace the line of march of any race back for four thousand years and more, find a cradle, and make the acquaintance of the baby, though we may still be in the dark as to its parentage.

In order to make clearer what will be said a little further on, it may be well to call to mind again what students of early Chinese history have told us of the limitations and weakness of the Chinese Middle Kingdom for many centuries after they settled near the southern bend of the Yellow River. Whether they were really intruders from central or western Asia or simply "grewed," like Topsy in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, is for our present purpose immaterial. All that we need to remember is that the Chinese in China, above four thousand years ago, were a settlement and not an empire. The same authorities tell us that their earliest expansion was, for the most part, eastward through the basin of the Yellow River, and that, by their slow process of infiltration and assimilation, it took them a thousand years to reach the Yellow Sea. Another thousand years passed before Chinese domination had effectively and permanently crossed the Yangtse on the south, and fully three thousand years had rolled by, after the legendary beginnings of the Middle Kingdom,

before much of the south-western parts of what we now know as China Proper became Chinese property in anything more than name.

There were wars of conquest, many of them, but in the main the extension of the Chinese political power was by peaceful means. In including the dominions of the aborigines within the administrative divisions of the empire the Chinese seem to have preferred gradual absorption to conquest and colonization. In fact the latter they were not always able to undertake. M. Terrien does not hesitate to say that the ruling of the independent aboriginal regions by their own chiefs, upon whom the Chinese Government bestowed Chinese titles, was the oldest system followed, because it would have been impossible to embrace them in the empire otherwise.\* A simple recognition of the suzerainty of the Chinese emperors, with the payment of a small tribute, and the grant of a new geographical name, he states, was all that was required before the time of the second Han dynasty (A.D. 25) to include the region among those composing the empire . . . So that, under the cover of Chinese titles and geographical names, large regions occupied by populations entirely non-Chinese were included as homogeneous parts of the nation, with the effect of concealing the real weakness of the Chinese empire previous to the last few centuries.

This learned sinologist cites the following instance to show what the situation really was. In the latter part of the fifth century of our era, the chief of the Pang race (which was Shan, but I need not anticipate) was recognized by the Chinese emperor as king of Siang-yang (Hupeh) and governor of King-chou. His realm, we are told, containing 80,000 villages, covered the provinces of the centre of China and extended northwards near the Yellow River. In the twelfth century they were still occupying the eastern part of Ssu-ch'uan and Kuei-chou, as well as the provinces of Hupeh and Hunan. We need not therefore marvel at his adding that

\* Practically the same system was followed by the Mongol-Chinese in Burma and the Shan States during the reign of Kublai Khan and later.

one of the most striking discoveries of modern research is the comparative youth of the Chinese as a great homogeneous and powerful people.

With the non-Chinese elements in the confederate states of ancient China, to the north and west of the Yellow River, we have nothing here to do. No one claims that they were in any way connected with the Shan race. We must turn our attention to the vast regions south of the Yangtse River and to a strip, in places in the ancient times by no means narrow, on the left of that river from its sources to its mouth. Large tracts in the extreme south-western part of this region have resisted the transforming hand of the Chinese down to the present time. Prof. Parker\* tells us that all of the wide area south of the Yangtse was not only uninfluenced but unknown to the Chinese till long after the days of Confucius, except to Ts'u, the southernmost of the confederate states of China, and that Ts'u itself was not Chinese but barbarian. But who were these barbarians? Were any of them Shans? If so, in what parts and in what proportion? Rightly or wrongly, M. Terrien† has answered this question for us, and we do well to stop a few minutes to see what he has to say.

The ethnological argument here rests almost wholly on the linguistical. Too much reliance should not be put upon it. An argument from language alone may have great value, but can never be absolutely conclusive. Every one, at all acquainted with the comparative science of languages, knows that languages are affected in too many ways—by intermingling and by wholesale transportation of tribes, for instance—to build safely on the linguistical argument alone. It is like a top that goes all right so long as it keeps spinning, but begins to wobble as soon as it stops to reflect that it is standing on one leg. Resting on the argument from language alone one might prove that the American negroes are Saxons. But let us take the argument for whatever it may be worth and see what can be made of it.

In doing so, long lists of unfamiliar words must be avoided. There are a few special students of old languages

\* *Ancient China Simplified*, p. 71.

† *The Languages of China before the Chinese*.

who pounce upon an ugly unfamiliar root-word like a vulture on carrion, but such words repel the average reader. When we come to consider the subject of linguistic affinities, it may be necessary to give a short list, but that dire and awful day will be put off as long as possible and made as short as a summer's night in the Land of the Midnight Sun. The present argument may seem, to many people, as dry and profitless as market-gardening in the Desert of Sahara; but if it can be shown that there is better reason for believing that the most numerous, most important and, in fact, the dominant race of the southern half of what is now China Proper was Shan, rather than Tibetan, Mongol, Lolo, or anything else, a good crop will be raised, even if there be a poor market for the vegetables.

## II.—IN SEARCH OF THE SHAN BABY'S FOOTPRINTS.

LET us take, first of all, the pre-Chinese languages spoken in the basin of the Yangtse, beginning at its mouth. Round about the mouth of that river, corresponding to the modern province of Kiangsu and adjacent regions, there was an ancient pre-Chinese state called Ngu or Wu. Only a few of the aboriginal words are quoted in the Chinese annals, such as the names or titles of kings, but these few are pure Shan, easily recognizable after the lapse of so many centuries. In the western part of the present province of Shangtung there was a tribe called by the Chinese, T'ung-jen (*alias* Huang). Either because they were called by this ugly name or under pressure they moved to the south-westward and settled in the south-west of Hupeh. Here they are said to have been independent until conquered by the equally barbarian state of Ts'u in 648 B.C. They came in 222 B.C. under the nominal rule, we are told, of Ts'in, one of the confederate Chinese states, but in 450 A.D. they rose in rebellion against other barbarians of Hupeh, Hunan and Ssu-ch'uan provinces and beat back the Chinese armies sent to subdue them. This resulted in their being acknowledged as practically independent by the Chinese Imperial Government. This little

historical reference is of value in that it throws light on their numbers and power. A Chinese resident of Kuang-hsi, in 1172 A.D., wrote of them and gave a short list of nine words of their language. Of these, three are Shan, three are Anamite, and the other three unrecognizable. But of nineteen words of this language, taken from the *Chinese Statistical Account of the Province of Kuang-hsi*, twelve are Shan and the remainder are Anamite. This throws them into what M. Terrien is pleased to call the "Mon-Taic" class.\* This is the more remarkable when we remember that those lists of words were taken down by Chinamen, with the ear of an elephant, in Chinese symbols pronounced differently at different times, and differently in different places at the same time, and that sinologists do not agree in their spelling in representing those sounds by English letters.

What "Mon-Taic" means may be explained, while you are pausing to catch your breath. This is not an idle task, for this learned sinologist asserts that the whole ancient population of China, south of the Yangtse, with the exception of a few intrusive tribes, such as the Lolos, was Mon-Taic. Mon-Taic, as used by M. Terrien, is a proper adjective applied to one and the same race, what he conceives to be the common stock from which what we now know as "Mons" and "Tais" (Shans) descended. Well-known modern representatives of the Mon are the Anamites of Anam, the Khmers and various hill tribes of Cambodia, the Talains, Palaungs, Was, Yangs (or Riangs) of Burma, and various other hill tribes. The Tais (Shans) are all the known and unknown branches of the Shan family as mentioned in the Introduction. That both of these races came from one and the same "Mon-Taic" stock is open to doubt, and a reason for saying so may be given at the next breathing spell. In the meantime let us follow up a little further the linguistic argument, in the search for the cradle of the Shan race and that lost baby.

We may now ascend the Yangtse to the modern province of Hupeh, the seat of the old barbarian state of Ts'u. Mr. Parker tells us that, in point of territorial expansion, it was

\* *The Languages of China before the Chinese.*

by far the largest of the confederate states of the empire. Northward it extended half-way across the region between the Yangtse and the Yellow rivers; eastward down the Yangtse it not only touched, but at one time swallowed up, the state of Ngu or Wu; southward it reached—nobody knows where, possibly to the sea; westward? never mind—I shall have more to say about that later on.

In speaking of the language used by the Ts'u, our learned friend, M. Terrien, starts in with a sort of Romulus and Remus fable of a baby that was suckled by a tigress. The two or three words quoted are manifestly Shan and are well enough in so far as they go, but unfortunately they do not go very far. Neither does the abuse he quotes from the "chattering philosopher Mensius" who called a man from that state a "shrieked-tongued barbarian"; but when he tells us that certain tribes now in the south-west of China, called by the Chinese "Chung-chia," formerly lived in the province of Kiangsi, where they were the representatives of the ancient ethnic stock of the Ts'u state, we prick up our ears with interest, and keep them pricked up to hear him say—as he does—that their dialect is Shan to such an extent that travellers acquainted with the Siamese language can understand it with little difficulty.\*

The Chung-chia, according to a Chinese manuscript written about 1730 A.D., "are the original Chinese"; because of "unlawfulness" they were banished (about 1000 B.C.) to Kuei-chou; but they are Shans now and hence they

\* Dr. Dodd, who has lived long among the Laos of northern Siam, says: "I have travelled for a thousand miles through the southern provinces of China without an interpreter. I used the Lao language of northern Siam, and except in a few places where the population was wholly Chinese, I found that the Lao speech made good everywhere. At the most western point reached in Yünnan, in a representative vocabulary of over two hundred words, only one in fourteen differed essentially from the standard in Chiengmai. In eastern Yünnan, about one in eight was different. And even in Kuang-hsi, not to exceed one in six by actual count." He found about the same proportion in Tongking. Many of these differences were doubtless due to phonetic changes that take place so rapidly in the languages of illiterate peoples, and hence more apparent than real. Of a short list of words taken down by Dr. Dodd in eastern Yünnan, every one is in common use in the British Shan states, with only two slight changes ("dang" for lang, and "ko" for kaw); and, surprisingly, both "dang" and "ko" reappear in Ahom and Kham-ti Shan.

must have been Shans then. It is comforting to know who the "original Chinese" of southern China really were.\*

If all this—and much more—be true, there seems to be no reason why this proper adjective, "Mon-Taic," might not be just as well written the other end to Tai-Monic. This holds for all that we have seen thus far. We may yet agree with Mr. Hallett when he says that these Shans not only stretch far away to the eastward, perhaps to the China Sea, but that they actually form one of the chief ingredients that compose the so-called Chinese race.

One more push up stream. M. Terrien says that a race, called by the Chinese "Pang,"† was predominant in central

\* See "Across Chryse," Vol. II, p. 366.

† M. Terrien's statement in regard to this Pang state is, in part, as follows: "In the centre were the Pang, of whom we hear at a very early date under more or less fabulous appearances. Historically they are mentioned as being very friendly with the Chinese since the beginning of the Hia dynasty, *i.e.*, the twentieth century B.C., helping them against their own internal divisions. They were settled in the north of Setchuen and Hupeh provinces, and the political existence of the Great Pang state was said to have been destroyed by Shang Wu-ting, in 1231 B.C., after a lapse of 767 years, which were afterwards fabulously considered as the lifetime of their first chief, 'the Patriarch Pang.' Confucius (Lun-yu, VII-1) speaks of 'Our old Pang.' Undoubtedly moved by a spirit of revenge, they rallied the Tchou, then beginning to gain power, and helped them to overthrow the decaying Shang-yin dynasty. Their secondary seat was between the Yuen and the Wu rivers, west and south-west of the Tung-ting lake, a mountainous region, which was highly favourable to gratify their hatred of the Chinese yoke" (*Cradle of the Shan Race*, pp. xliv-xlv).

This name may reappear in "Mu-pang," the name now applied by the Chinese to Hsenwi. It may at an earlier date have been used by them for all the Cis-Salween Shan states taken collectively; but after the eastern part of what I shall later call the "Mao kingdom" was captured, for good and all, by the Chinese, including what is now known as "Möng-mao," Hsenwi was the nearest and most powerful of the Shan states (except perhaps Mogaung, which had set up separate house-keeping), and had at least nominal control of about one-half of what are now called the Shan States. Since then, Mu-pang has meant Hsenwi. The name itself is an abbreviation of "Möng-pang." I have noticed several cases of this clipping of Möng into Mo or Mu. I think that "Pang" is another Chinese corruption of the Shan "Pawng," and the Cambodia River Shans still call all of the Shans over this way "Tai-pawng." Again, I fancy that this is the "Pong" of Pemberton, discussed in the *Gazetteer of Upper Burma*, and mentioned in the short *Histories of Burma* by Phayre and Cocks. Compare "Me-kong" (the Cambodia River) in which the o has the sound of o in the English word *song* or *strong*. I prefer to spell the name of that river, "Me-k'awng." The same word, "Pawng," seems to occur in *Ong-pawng* (Hsipaw).



China, south of the Yellow River, in pre-Chinese times. He gives as their habitat the north-east of Ssu-ch'uan and the west of Honan, and adds that their generic name was Ngao or Yao. The word is pure Shan and means "Great." The oldest relics of their speech, we are told, are those which were preserved by the Chinese writers of the Han dynasty, notably in the annals of the eastern Han. There are only eight words in the list, but of the eight five are Shan. The central group of the Pang race was included in the barbarian state of Ts'u. They gained their independence, we are further told, after the collapse of the Ts'in empire, 209 B.C. They did not acknowledge the Chinese supremacy, according to this authority, before the end of the eleventh century A.D. It was their chief who was recognized by the Chinese Emperor, in the fifth century A.D., as king of Siang-yang (Hupeh) and governor of King-chou, previously mentioned. This is another instance of a Tai-Monic, rather than of a Mon-Taic race, if such a common stock ever existed at all. There was another branch of this Pang race in Ssu-ch'uan called Pa or Pa-i. They were conquered by the confederate Chinese state of Ts'in in 339 B.C., and moving gradually southward are now scattered throughout Yünnan, where they are now called by the Chinese "Pai-yi."

Be patient, learned reader, I shall soon come to the end of that part of the ethnological argument that rests mainly on evidence from language and you shall then be given another chance to rest and catch your breath. In the search for the lost Shan baby, it is necessary to keep an eye on the track and note the little footprints. That old barbarian state of Ts'u and this latter sub-state of Pang had, they say, a westward extension in a state called Tien or T'ien. According to the writer I have been quoting, it extended to the centre of Yünnan, but from Shan sources we learn that it reached westward to the Salween River. I shall have more to say about that state in due time. Let us now give our raft its last push up towards the head-waters of the Yangtse. Here we come to another branch of the Shan family or another name for the same branch, called Lao, Ai-lao, or Ngai-lao.

It is said that, according to tradition, their early home was at the intersection of Honan, Hupeh, and Nang-hwui provinces, whence they extended westward in the Kiu-lung range of mountains, forming the boundary between Shensi and Ssu-ch'uan. It is right here, in a pocket of these mountains, that M. Terrien found, or thought he found, the cradle of the Shan race and listened to the soft croonings of the mother's lullaby. Unfortunately, the evidence here rests on a fable in which, it is claimed, two words are Shan. We may take more seriously his statement when he says that we hear of another branch of the race, in the third century B.C., when the Ts'in advanced into Ssu-ch'uan, and again of their making raids on Chinese territory in 47 A.D. As I shall have much to say of these Shans before I get through with them, let us pause right here for the promised breathing spell.

There are now two questions, instead of one, to answer. Is M. Terrien right or wrong in using his proper adjective, "Mon-Taic," of one and the same race, the common stock from which both Mons and Shans are off-shoots? And has he found the cradle of the Shan race in the Kiu-lung mountains?

Of his lists of words, those referred to here were selected as most favourable to the Shan side of the argument. In some of the other lists a larger percentage of Mon words occurs. On the whole (so far as those words are concerned), the evidence is equally divided between the Mon and the Shan. These are old lists, remember, and were collected by the Chinese. It is not only possible but probable that there were two great races in southern China, the Mon and the Shan, and that the Chinese collectors gathered words from both and mixed them up later in following their ideographic system. It is also possible and probable that if these two races were there that they would intermingle and that each would borrow from the other, and that the extent of the borrowing would depend upon the extent of the intermingling. So that we need not attribute all the mixing to the Chinese collectors.

The fact that some of the tribes in extreme south-western China, the modern representatives of older stocks, speak dialects containing both Shan and Mon words proves nothing, as those dialects are confessedly mixed. If it be true that there was once a Mon-Taic stock, the mother of both the Mon and the Shan races as we know them to-day, it is curious that one of them, consciously or unconsciously, selected a certain set of words, as represented in the lists, and that the other selected another set of words, while there are practically none of these words at all still used in common (there are other words that are used in common, but they may be due to more recent borrowing). This fact alone throws considerable doubt on M. Terrien's theory and justifies the supposition that there were at least two great races—Mons and Shans—in southern China.\*

A similar doubt may be expressed in regard to his location of the cradle of the Shan race. He places it in the Kiu-lung range, and bases his linguistic argument on the name alone. The Chinese seem to have come in touch with a Shan tribe called "Great Mung," at the time of the "geological survey which goes under the name of the Great Yü." The western part of Ssu-ch'uan is given as their habitat, and the time is put at more than two thousand years B.C. M. Terrien says that they are "obviously of the same (Shan) race," and they may be the progenitors of the Shans of Tongking called by the same name at the present time. Two other Shan tribes of Ssu-ch'uan are mentioned a little later (1971 B.C.), the Lung and the Pa. It may be from the former that the Kui-lung range of mountains takes its name. Kui is a Shan word that might even now be very properly used of a mountainous wilderness, and the name may mean "the Wilderness of the Lung" or the "Lung Wilderness." Still another branch of the Shan family

\* All I am contending for here is that the Shans and the Mons are distinct races in the same sense as that the Shans and the Chinese, or the Karens, or the Tibetans, are distinct races. Some savant may show, if he has not done so already, that all these (and many others) came originally from the same stock. That may be considered later; but we will not cross the bridge till we come to it.

(or another name for the same branch), the Lao, has already been mentioned. If these Shans had their early home "at the intersection of Honan, Hupeh, and Nang-hwui provinces," and later extended westward in the Kiu-lung range, it would give us a belt of Shans (Mung, Lung, Pa, Pang and Lao) on the left of the Yangtse reaching from western Ssu-ch'uan almost to the sea, bringing us up in Kiangsu, where we started in our linguistic survey. The Lao mountains may have taken their name from this latter Shan tribe. It is said that Kieh, the last ruler of the Hia dynasty, was exiled among these Shans by the founder of the Shang dynasty (1558 B.C.). M. Terrien goes so far as to say, "I am not indisposed to say that the Shang (*i.e.*, traders) who overthrew the Hia dynasty and gave their name to the following one, were connected with the Shan race, and that their very name, or a form of it, is perhaps the antecedent of that of Shan or Siam." \*

This authority continuing says, "We know more of the original seat of the Lao, or Ngai-lao, than of the others. The very spot which their traditions point out is the Lao Shan, *i.e.*, Lao mountains." The legend referred to states that a certain woman had ten sons by a naga (serpent or

\* Continuing M. Terrien says: "Many names much like this, such as Tchang, Siang, Shen, Sien, etc., etc., are met with in the nomenclature of native clans and tribes of the same stock in its earlier seats in central China, and leaves no doubt that they all represented one original name." There is ample evidence of this, for several of these forms of the name, or slightly different ones, are still in use. The Shans are called Shen by the Was and Las; Tsim, by the Cantonese; Sam, by the Kachins. Comparing these forms of the word with the changes that may be traced in other words, we find that *Shang* or *Shiang*, as an earlier form of *Shan*, is exactly what one might reasonably expect. Mr. Taw Sein Ko does not think that M. Terrien is a safe guide here. He states his view in this way: "Kamboja (Cambodia) was known as Chamba, and its people as Cham, which has been corrupted into Shan, the appellation applied by the Burmans to the whole Tai race." He holds that Cambodia "was a great centre of Shan civilization in the Indo-Chinese peninsula" during the early Christian centuries. I am not aware of the evidence upon which this claim is based. The Cambodian civilization was Indian, not Shan. That the Shans held ascendancy over Cambodia, off and on, during that early period, may be granted. There is another difficulty here: the population of Cambodia was predominantly Khmer (Mon), and that the Burmans should have confused the two races in this way seems improbable. The doctors disagree. The patient may take whichever prescription he likes.

dragon) father. At the foot of the mountains a man very conveniently was the father of ten daughters. These sons took the daughters to wife. They made their youngest brother their king.\* He was succeeded by his descendants for several generations, until subdivisions took place under the rule of smaller kings. They habitually dwelt in communities scattered among the ravines and valleys (as all Shans do), in the uttermost regions beyond the confines of China (of that day), with which, cut off by mountain ranges and deep rivers, they had never from earliest times held any intercourse. This seems to be a description of Ssu-ch'uan, the Four-stream state, and of its early inhabitants. The old name of this region was Shuh,<sup>†</sup> which looks suspiciously like the Shan word for "tiger," and the Shans of Burma belong to the "tiger tribe." Nothing can be made of this, but that the Lao, the Pa, the Lung, and the Mung of Ssu-ch'uan were Shans there is little room to doubt, for certain of the Shans still bear all these names.

It seems safe to make two assumptions: that the Shans were the dominant race in a wide strip on the left of the Yangtse from Ssu-ch'uan to the sea, before the expansion of the Chinese power; and that, as the expansion of the civilized Chinese was down the basin of the Yellow River, so the expansion of the barbarous Shans was down the basin of the Yangtse. Major Davies infers that the Shans, crowded out by the Chinese, came from the east; but they may have risen to power in Ssu-ch'uan and reached the east from the west at an earlier date.

The Mon race apparently lay to the south and south-west of them, and were later crowded still farther to the south-westward by the expansion of the Shan power in that direction. This assumption tallies with the Anamite traditions.

\* Mr. Taw Sein Ko rightly states that "primogeniture appears to have governed the Shan laws of inheritance"; but there have been many exceptions. Shan kings could name as their successors any one they wished, but any appointee might be rejected by the Official Board, who were supposed to be the representatives of the people, though not chosen by them.

† Mr. Taw Sein Ko endorses the view that Shuh was the name of a Shan tribe. He says: "I believe that the Shans call themselves *Shu* (Shuh), the ancient Chinese name of Ssu-ch'uan."

"The Anamite traditions extend to the time of the first dynastic Emperor of China, that wonderful engineer Yü, who controlled the waters, in whose time they (the Anamites) were denizens of Tongking and the region lying between it and the Yangtse Kiang." \* This tradition, like all such traditions, may have a grain of truth in it—and may not. The wise, and the would-be wise, are agreed, however, that the Mons were the first of the now known races of Indo-China to migrate south-westward from the highlands of central China. However this may be, it is certain that the Mons differ very widely from the Shans, not only in language, but in physical characteristics. The Anamites, as well as the Palaungs and the Was, and other Mon tribes, are much shorter, darker, and far more ugly than the Shans.

So much for the expansion of the Shan race; but it is well to remember that the expansion of a race is one thing and that the origin of a race is quite another. We know where the early home of the Chinese was above four thousand years ago at the beginning of their legendary history, but no one knows conclusively the place of their origin. The early home of the Shans may have been, and probably was, in the ravines and valleys of Ssu-ch'uan, but this is far from saying that they originated there. The legend of "Kiu-lung" does not necessarily refer to the origin of a race, but rather to the origin of a fabulous dynasty of kings. It has its counterpart in the legends of the aborigines of Hainan, of the Khmers of Cambodia, of the Talains of Lower Burma, and of the Shans and the Palaungs of the Shan States. They all, with one possible exception, refer to the origin of a local, primal, mythical king. They simply point us back to a spot in tradition beyond which the historic fancy does not deign to go.

Prof. Parker says that Shuh and Pa, the two Shan districts and Shan tribes of Ssu-ch'uan, were inaccessible to the Han River system. Pa, he adds, had relations with Ts'u so early as 600 B.C., and that later Pa princesses married Ts'u kings. The Pa or Pa-i were certainly Shans,

\* Mr. Colquhoun, *Amongst the Shans*, p. 158.

and the Shans of south-western Yünnan are still so called by the Chinese. This gives another hint that the Ts'u kings also may have been Shans. At all events, the fact, taken in connection with all that has gone before, and with much that will come hereafter, is very significant. When Pa princesses married Ts'u kings we are not told, but the date may be inferred by a statement on page 71 of his valuable book.\* "The king of Ts'u (died 591 B.C.), besides taking his place amongst the recognized federal princes, and annexing innumerable petty Chinese principalities in the Han River and Hwai River basins, had been for several generations quietly extending his dominions at the expense of what we now call the provinces of Ssu-ch'uan, Kiangsi, Hu Kwang—perhaps even Yünnan and Kwei Chou; certainly Kiang Su and Choh Kiang, and probably in a loose way the coast regions of modern Fuh Kien and the Two Kwang; but it cannot be too often repeated that if anything intimate was known of the Yangtse basin, it was only Ts'u (in its double character of independent local empire as well as Chinese federal prince) that knew, or could have known, anything about it."

On an accompanying map, apparently for the same date, he marks Shuh and Pa in the modern Ssu-ch'uan as "unknown to orthodox China." Further on (page 147) Prof. Parker says that now (376 B.C.) Ts'in found occupation in extending her territory to the south-west at the expense of Shuh, a vast dominion corresponding to the modern Ssu-ch'uan, up to then almost unheard of by orthodox China, but which, it then first transpired, had had three kings and ten emperors of its own, nine of these latter bearing the same appellation.\* This shows when these Shans first felt the grip of China's outstretching hand. It does not necessarily follow that the Shans were expelled from that region at that time. As a matter of fact, M. Terrien states that Pa tribes were not subdued till 338 B.C., and they may not even then have been driven out, for that was not China's method, as a rule, in dealing with subject races. However

\* *Ancient China Simplified.*

that may be, since that time the Shans of that region have slowly advanced southward.

In speaking of the origin of the Shans, Captain Forbes states the case in this way: "The probabilities are that the Tai (Shan) and other kindred tribes which the Chinese encountered, as the latter pressed southward into the great southern bend of the Kin-sha River, had followed the same route as the Chinese themselves, through Turkestan, and possibly striking the head-waters of the Kin-sha, had pursued the same course of that great river as it led to the south." This is merely the easy and familiar dodge of referring the origin of a race back to—Heaven alone knows where.

In the light of all this, M. Terrien makes a claim that is astounding. He says: "An ethnological hypothesis which would make the Tai (Shan) race the outcome of an intermingling in irregular proportions of Mons, Negritos, and Chinese, would not be objectionable in any way." It is objectionable in every way. Neither M. Terrien nor any other sinologist has ever produced any evidence that the Mon race is older than the Shan, as they would have to be on this hypothesis. Both races may go straight and independently back, like the spokes of a wheel, to the same Mongolian hub; though it may be granted that the Mons were the first to advance into the Indo-Chinese peninsula.

There are no Negritos in China or Indo-China now, though that there once were may be inferable.\* Whether there were or not, certainly no one has shown that there was ever a Negrito in the Lao or Kiu-lung mountains, where M. Terrien places the cradle of the Shan race. The Negritos were short, dark, and ugly, quite unlike the Shans. In speaking of the Laos of Northern Siam, Mr. Colquhoun says: "The chaos or chiefs are generally very fine-looking

\* Mr. Taw Sein Ko, in this connection, says: "It is supposed by geologists that the Andamans, where the Negritos are now found, were at one time joined to the mainland of Burma, and that the Negritos appear to be the primeval race inhabiting the Indo-Chinese peninsula." He is inclined to think that the indigo colour of the *Was* is a mixture of the black of the Negritos and the yellow of the Mons.



men, tall and fair, with good noses and light eyes. The other men are tall, stout, hardy, and active. The women also are tall and remarkably well proportioned, very fair, and decidedly a handsome race." "It is not unlikely," he continues, "that the white women noticed by travellers, more than a thousand years ago, amongst the black people of Cambodia were Shan or Karen captives, both of these people being remarkably fair for Easterns."\* As to the Chinese, M. Terrien himself shows that the Shans were in Ssu-ch'uan, and all the way down the basin of the Yangtse, for two thousand years before the Middle Kingdom extended, more than in name, to that river, except the confederate state of Ts'u, which was not Chinese at all, but barbarian—and probably largely Shan.

The Shans, for all that we know to the contrary, are as old as the Mons. They are as tall and as fair as the Chinese (unlike the Negritos). The presence of Chinese words in the Shan language can be accounted for without assuming racial connection. This will be considered later on. We know simply nothing of the origin of the Shans. All that we have found—if we have found anything—is an early encampment on their line of march. That the Shans were the dominant race between the watersheds of the Yangtse, from Ssu-ch'uan to its mouth, is hardly open to doubt.

\* *Amongst the Shans*, p. 255.

## SHANS OF YÜNNAN AND BEYOND

### I.—FROM EARLY TIMES TO THE MIDDLE OF THE SEVENTH CENTURY A.D.

MANY centuries ago there was in south-western China a Shan kingdom whose king or chief was called, because of his geographical position in relation to the capital of the China of that day, "Nan-chao" or Southern Prince. It was a Shan kingdom, and considerable information has been gleaned in regard to it from the *After Han History*, as translated and interpreted by Prof. Parker. Unfortunately his valuable paper is hidden away in an issue of the *China Review*,\* a scholarly journal little read outside of a select class of savants interested in things Chinese. Though Prof. Parker was not the only or the first sinologist to call attention to this particular chapter in Chinese history, he seems to have been the first to see the relation of Nan-chao dominions to the modern Shan states to the west and south. I am indebted entirely to Prof. Parker for the facts that will be given here, but he may not be held responsible for the comments that may be made concerning them.

First of all, Prof. Parker gives us a general statement. The spelling is not in every instance just what I have been in the habit of using, but I will take the statement as it stands. "It is evident," he says, "that the Ai-lau and Nan-chao dominions once extended far away into Sz Ch'wan and Kwei Chou, embracing nearly the whole of Yünnan, and parts of Tonquin and Kwang Si. The so-called Muongs of Tonquin and the Laotien states of Luang Prabang, Xiengmai or Zemme, and Vocian or Yung-ch'ang of

\* *The China Review*, September and October 1890.  
*The Early Laos and China*, by E. H. Parker.

modern times are undoubtedly the direct descendants of the Ai-laos, but so little is known of these states that it is difficult to say how far each one in its turn has represented or still represents the old confederation of Chaus, Muongs, or Shiengs."

That the Chinese included all the regions mentioned here in the Nan-chao kingdom, or confederation, is doubtless correct, though it is not certain that any one Shan chief ever ruled over it all. To say that all of the foregoing were undoubtedly the direct descendants of the Ai-lau (Ai-lao) branch of the Shan family also is putting it stronger than the evidence may warrant. Some of them may have descended from Shans to the eastward (the Pangs or Pawngs) rather than from the Ai-laos to the northward. The early home of the Laos or Ai-laos was in Ssu-ch'uan, and eastward, on the left of the Yangtse. Their modern representatives, or some of them, in south-western Yünnan, are now called, by the Chinese, Pai-yi.

Beginning now with the Ai-lao barbarians, as translated and interpreted from the *After Han History*, Prof. Parker starts in with the legend of Kiu-lung, already mentioned. He then goes on to say that their king sent troops on boat-rafts down the Yangtse to attack the Luh-to barbarians who lived near the Chinese frontier of those days. M. Terrien says that they descended both the Yangtse and the Han rivers, *i.e.*, through a region that had previously been within the extension of the Ts'u dominions. The date is given as A.D. 47. Thirty years later this king, with about eighteen thousand of his followers, tendered his submission to the governor of Yueh-sui and applied to be attached to the empire. In a note, Mr. Parker adds that Yueh-sui was between the Yalung and the Yangtse rivers. There are still a few Shan villages there. These little scraps of history are valuable in indicating how slow the Chinese were in extending their rule over these barbarians. This was four centuries after Ts'in "found occupation in extending her territory to the south-west at the expense of Shuh." Four centuries was a long time in which to complete the bargain.

The next statement is far more important : " In the year A.D. 69 Liu Man, King of Ai-laos, sent his son at the head of the men of his tribe to attach themselves to the empire ; there were altogether 77 so-called Kings of Communities, comprising 553,711 individuals. They were 7,000 li south-west of Loh-yang. The Emperor Hien (Min Ti) made their territory into two districts ruled over by the Western proconsul, forming thus with them the prefecture of Yung-chang."

Ai-lao and Poh-nam, together with six other districts (set off from the prefecture of Cheng-tu), formed the new prefecture of Yung-chang—and the lot was 7,000 li south-west of Loh-yang, extending apparently to Cambodia and the Bay of Bengal. What does all this mean? There is a town in Yünnan, directly west of the capital, called Yung-chang, and there was a large Shan city far down the Cambodia River called Ving-chang ; probably the upper town was meant. Much of this territory, as will soon appear, did not come permanently under the emperor until a much later time ; but that the Chinese were active in all this region during the *After Han Dynasty* there is no sufficient reason to doubt.

The story goes on to say that then the first travellers penetrated the Poh-nan mountains, and crossed the Lan-sang River. The Poh-nan mountains were apparently the mountain range between Anam and (ancient) Cambodia, and the Me-k'awng (Cambodia) River is still called by the Chinese, Lan-sang, to above Yung-chang—further up it takes another name. As the Chinese might claim everything they set foot on, this gives a hint that Ving-chang may have been the seat of the second prefecture.

The following excerpts from this historical writing show what the political situation may have been : " Formerly Cheng Shun, the proconsul for the western tribes, was pure in his rule, and civilization spread among the savage barbarians . . . The Emperor praised him and appointed him governor of Yung-chang. Cheng Shun then entered into a treaty with the Ai-lao barbarians that each head of a community should pay a yearly impost of two cloth garments,

having a hole for the head,\* and one measure of salt as constant tribute. This suited the barbarian ways, and Cheng Shun died at his post, having for ten years held the office of proconsul and governor-prefect." These barbarians learned how to pay taxes anyway, as a part of the civilizing process, but it was only a nominal tribute for the head of each community to pay. It does indicate, however, that the attachment to the empire did involve the recognition on the part of the Ai-laos of at least a nominal suzerainty of the Middle Kingdom. This is about the same as the Chinese Emperor, at an earlier date, exacted from the confederate state of Ts'u. The Ai-laos were then a Chinese hinterland.

In the next paragraph we are told that the king of the Ai-laos, in A.D. 76, having a quarrel with the prefect and the district ruler, killed them at T'ang Cheng in Yueh-sui, which was between the Yalung and the Yangtse rivers, in Ssu-ch'uan. This is another instance of the slow advance of the Chinese as a dominant race in those regions.

These Shans, though called "savage barbarians," may not have been so barbarous as they were regarded by the more cultured Chinese. Their land, according to the record, was rich, suitable for various kinds of grain, silkworms, and the mulberry tree. The people understood how to dye gaily patterned fabrics and to manufacture rugs, cotton and fine hemp cloths, which they wove into patterns like figured damasks. Gold, silver, copper, iron, tin and lead were the products of their mines.

Though that westward march of the empire is said to have been seven thousand li south-west of Loh-yang, the

\* Such sleeveless tunics are now worn by Karens, and the question has been asked, "Could the Ai-laos have been Karens?" The answer is conclusive: Ai-lao is a pure Shan name; there are still Shans who call themselves and are called by this name; a little further on in the record it is distinctly said that the Ai-lao males wore "coats and trousers"; if it was an Ai-lao garment at all, it was a woman's garment; it is not said that Ai-laos wore it, but that it was an impost; to have commanded that tribute be paid in first or second hand apparel of barbarian females would have been undignified; two cloth garments per community was only a slight tribute, negligible as revenue. These tunics may have been Karen garments, but if so they were demanded as evidence that the Ai-lao chiefs were maintaining effective rule over subject tribes. Colonel Gerini went so far as to claim that *Lao* (Ai-lao) was the generic name of all the Shans.

first account seems to be of the Ai-laos, in general, of northern Yünnan and southern Ssu-ch'uan. That account is followed by another, taken from the "T'ang Shu" of the so-called "Nan-chao Kingdom" in particular. From the names given and the locations indicated, we may be safe in inferring that five of the six chieftainships mentioned, at the start, were old Ai-laos to the north and west of the upper Yangtse in Ssu-ch'uan, and that the time was before their expulsion or absorption by the Chinese. The sixth chieftainship, called "Möng-che-chao," was south of the others and also south of the "iron bridge." Mr. Taw Sein Ko says that this is the *T'ieh-pi-kuan* or "The Pass of the Iron Wall," and that it is south of Têngyüeh and close to the Burmese frontier. There is a town of the above name southward from the present capital of Yünnan; this may be the place meant, but there is no certainty of it. "Möng-che-chao" means the country of the city of the king. Möng-che-long is another form meaning the country of the great city. Both mean, or may mean, "capital," regardless of its location. The special site referred to here may be considered further on.

A very definite description of the boundaries of the Nan-chao kingdom (or confederacy or whatever it was) is given, from which Mr. Parker is able to declare, in substance, that it included all or practically all of Yünnan and parts of the provinces to the eastward, reached Ssu-ch'uan and Tibet on the north and north-west, Tongking and Cambodia on the south, the plains of Burma on the south-west, and Magadha in the valley of the Ganges, probably including Assam, on the west. This description is given in connection with the statement that "Chukoh Liang reduced them," and Mr. Parker adds, "He carried his arms into Burma." He further quotes Captain Forbes as saying, "The native Burmese history mentions a Chinese invasion between A.D. 161 and 241, which, Mr. Parker asserts, was an invasion by this Chukoh Liang." By this it appears that the Nan-chao expansion had taken place before A.D. 241 certainly. We shall see, further on, that the expansion of Nan-chao had taken place, and that this was not, with reasonable certainty,

the first time that Chinese arms were carried into Burma. According to Mr. Parker, China was split up at this time into three kingdoms and "Chukoh Liang's master's kingdom in modern Ssu-ch'uan can hardly be called China."

If this be correct, our preconceptions of Shan history in what are now British possessions must be recast. It is manifest, however, that there are claims here that need to be qualified. We shall see later that the extension of the Shan power to the south and the south-west was as early as the date given here or earlier. But, if the Shan dominions at that early date, or at any other, extended westward to the Ganges, there seems to be no evidence of it in Shan or Indian history, and the conquest of Assam came at a much later time. Neither does it appear at all certain, even from the Chinese account given here, that Nan-chao, as covering such a vast region, was ever a compact kingdom ruled over by a single monarch. It may at times have been a confederacy, but it was not always even that. Reasons for saying so will soon be given.

A custom of those early days is mentioned: "The king sits facing the east." Why? No reason is given; but it is easy to assume one, and a good one. The king of the confederate state of Ts'u may have been a Shan and probably was. At an earlier time than this he extended his dominions to the westward up the Yangtse and the Han rivers at the expense of the Ai-laos of Ssu-ch'uan. Ai-lao princesses, as we have seen, married Ts'u kings. The king of Ts'u may have been the mesne-lord over all the Shans. If this be so, the act was one of worship when it first became established, and as long as it was practised. This is fancy, but it is fancy playing with real historical facts. The kings of Ts'u sat facing the emperor.

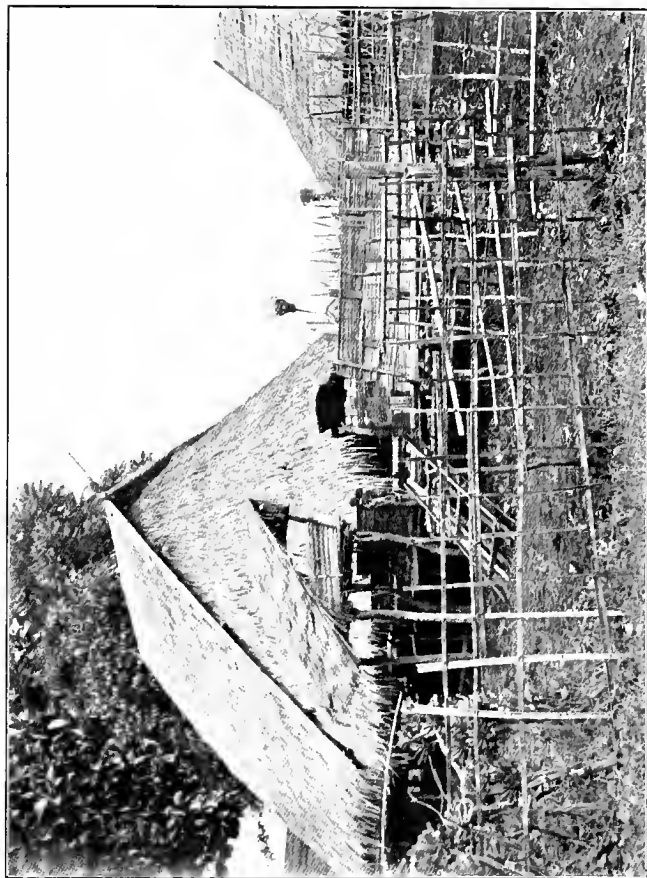
In regard to this matter of "facing," Mr. Parker says: "In 546 B.C. a counsellor of Ts'u explained to the king how, since Ts'in influence had predominated in the orthodox state of Cheng, this last has ceased to face south towards its former protector. Thus, though the Emperor faces south towards the sun, and his subjects in turn face north in his honour, these subjects face their other protector in

whatever direction he may lie, supposing the Emperor's protection to be inadequate. It is evidently the same principle as bowing towards the east, and turning towards Mecca, both of which formalities must be modified according to place." It is evident therefore that in facing east the kings of Nan-chao looked for protection from that quarter. Later, as we shall see, in acknowledgment of the Chinese Emperor's protection, they faced north.\*

Now come the names of the officers and the organization of the kingdom. This seems to refer to a very early period, and indicates considerable administrative capacity. There were ministers to decide matters of state, governors, army officers; officers over the finances and the public works; even officers over horses, cows and granaries are mentioned; then come officers for levying and collecting taxes, for the management of secret business, and officers in charge of the palaces. The last were probably eunuchs, though this is not expressly stated. Land was parcelled out to officials and others according to their rank. This After-Han account may err at this point. If that was the regular system of land-tenure, the system has changed very much since then. Mr. Taw Sein Ko thinks the account is all right, but that the system has changed. Among the Shans, the land now, in theory, belongs to the state; the state parcels it out to village communities; the village communities make allotments to the farmers. The farmers own only the right to cultivate and, in some instances, with the sanction of the community, to dispose of their improvements. This system seems to have been handed down from ancient times. It was, and still is, like the old Hebrew system, where the land belonged to

\* At this point Mr. Taw Sein Ko adds this informing note: "The Burmese Kings always faced the east. They styled themselves 'Lords of the Western Countries.' The Chinese Emperors were called 'Elder brothers and Lords of the eastern countries.' A vassal had always to face in the direction of the Suzerain's capital. Whenever Shan Chiefs received, in their own States, presents or titles from Burmese Kings, they had to kneel down and face in the direction of the Burmese capital." The Burman custom of facing to the east never sprang up from just nothing at all. There is a clear indication here that Burma, at some early day, was in vassalage to China. More will be said of this later on.





A TYPICAL NORTHERN SHAN HOUSE.



Jehovah, the national god, which is only another way of saying that it belonged to the people as a social unit, and not to land-sharks.\*

All able-bodied men were liable to military service, as they formerly were here in these Shan states. Even France and Germany are not more civilized than that. The army was divided into four departments, and each had its own flag. The soldiers were supplied with helmets and with shields of copper and rhinoceros-hide. The account states that they were also supplied with coats and trousers of leather. A leader was appointed over each one hundred men, an officer over each one thousand, and a commander-in-chief over the four armies. There were six viceroys for outside regions and the kingdom itself was divided into ten "kien."† From K'uh-tsing Chou to Tien Ch'i (? Yünnan-sen) the people cultivated wet-fields, fed silkworms with oak leaves, wove fine and embroidered silk fabrics, sifted gold from sand, and raised horses. This is, on the whole, a generous description for the Chinese to give of "jungle-savages."

Some of the customs mentioned may be noticed. When the king went out he set up eight flags of greyish-purple with white scollops. Why there were eight is not evident. It was probably merely to indicate his exalted rank, just as the rank of Burman officials was indicated by the number and colour of the umbrellas they were permitted to carry. Heads of departments were permitted to wear golden girdles, and tiger-skin coats were a mark of special merit, though they are now worn by everybody that can pay for them, and by some that can't. The women moistened their hair with thyme but did not blacken their eyebrows or powder their faces. If they were as handsome as Mr. Colquhoun found them in

\* In both cases, there was freedom from the social curse of wealthy land-proprietors complacently thinking that God made the world for them, and of wretched landless toilers of the soil discontentedly suspicious that God didn't. The Shans, under their present system, can never witness the growth of great estates and a landed aristocracy on the one side, and the growth of a landless proletariat on the other. It is enough to say here that the system is not only unsurpassed, but is unequalled in any so-called civilized country.

† "Kien" seems to be the same word as "Keng," in Keng-tung (pronounced Tsing by the K'öns of that place); "Tchen," in Tchen-Tching; and "Chieng," in Chieng-mai.

Chieng-mai, they did not need to enhance their beauty. The noble ones among them then, as now, had satin embroidered petticoats, with strips of embroidery upon their jackets. There has been little change also in the way they dressed their hair, which they gathered into two locks and braided into a chignon. That describes the present custom of the Shan women over there very well, and shows how observing these Chinese writers were. Then, as now, their ears were ornamented with pearls, greenstone (? jade), and amber. The next is a libel on the maidenly modesty of the girls who, we are told, gadded about in the evenings on the sly, but those who had promiscuous relations were permitted to marry.\* There is no such "gadding" now. When once married, the penalty for adultery was death—and still is, in some cases, among the Shans of western China. They made a condiment, as they still do, of fish, pepper, and ginger, with a little salt, and called it "nga-kueh." "Nga" was an old Shan word for fish, and is still used in some sections; "kueh" is the Shan for any granulated substance, as salt or sugar; so the name meant simply "salted-fish." Where fish are scarce or hard to get, beans are now used instead. Those of us who have eaten this condiment found it not unpalatable. For music, they played on a gourd organ with four blow-pipes, of which the music is not unlike that of bag-pipes. These are still in use by various hill tribes, such as the Lahus, Yang-lams, and others. The Shans of Burma have exchanged them for the ear-splitting Burmese instruments.

They used "lustrings," and other cloth, and cowries, and the like, in market barter, instead of money, and they still do, to a large extent in the same localities. Sixteen cowries made one mih, which is apparently the Shan word "mit," the common name for anything small like a two-anna silver

\* Promiscuous cohabitation between boys and girls after they have reached the age of puberty (in dwellings specially prepared for the purpose) is regarded among the Kachins as quite the proper thing to do—a mere conventionality of well regulated society. When a girl becomes a mother-expectant, she points out the responsible swain and he must marry her or give a pig or pup or some other suitable present for damages. The girl does not appear to suffer in reputation because of the accident.

piece. The writer seems to have forgotten one item in regard to the army and inserts it here. He says that 2,500 warriors made one camp, that each warrior carried a peck and a half of grain, and that those wounded in the back in battle were decapitated, a drastic disciplinary measure in holding soldiers to the line. Taxes were not heavy, each man paying annually two pecks of rice, with no forced labour. Mr. Parker also states that there was, in the royal family, a succession by names: A.B. called his son B.C. and B.C. called his son C.D. and so on interminably, each taking a part of his father's name—there is no such custom now.

## II.—FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE SEVENTH TO THE MIDDLE OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURIES.

THE first definite date given in this second record is “in the Emperor Kau’s time (A.D. 650—684),” when the Nan-chao king sent an envoy to court and was presented with an embroidered robe. This was four or five centuries after the former date referred to (taken from Burman sources). If the Chinese (this is a Chinese record) were in constant control of Nan-chao, it is difficult to explain the silence. Can it be that it was at this time, and not before, that the emperor became, in any real sense, the Protector of the Nan-chao kings, *i.e.*, after the close of the Han dynasty? The account is so scrappy that the relation between the Shans and the Chinese is nowhere very clear.

Towards the close of a certain reign (713—742) the then Shan king drove out the “river-savages” as they were called. This was in what is now known as the “Tali” valley in northern Yünnan. The bulk of the savages there now are Minchias. Whether they were then or not is not known. He took Taho city; erected a wall round Lung-k’ou, probably in the same valley; made Taho the residence of his adopted son, T’ai-lo-feng, otherwise called “Kolofung,” which is the K’un Lu Fong of the Shans (Lord Lu the Glorious). The statement is also made that “he took and held Tali city,” but the old name of Tali appears to have been “Shi,” and

may have been called "Tali" here, in this copy of the ancient record, by way of anticipation. Mr. Parker claims that it did not take the latter name till long after this time. If what we now know as Tali was then occupied, or reoccupied, by the Shans, and Taho was made the capital of the king's adopted son, where did the king himself live? Where was his capital? It is certain that the Nan-chao capital was at one time at Yang-tsü-me. But where was that? There is a place near the modern Möng-myen (Têng-yüeh)\* of this name, but the record states that Yang-tsü-me was twenty-five li from Taho. That is about the distance of the modern Tali Fu from Taho. Möng-myen is much farther away. But if the capital was at Yang-tsü-me, and Yang-tsü-me was Tali, why did the king take and hold his own city? And why should the district have been occupied by "river-savages"? It is a Chinese puzzle. It seems, on the whole, most probable that the Yang-tsü-me referred to was near the modern Möng-myen, and that the record is mistaken in saying that it was twenty-five li from Taho. At about this time (the middle of the eighth century), we are told that of the "six chaos" (kings), five were weak, and that the Shan king above referred to, called by the Chinese P'i-lo-t'ai, welded them into one (himself). Whoever and whatever these six kings may have been, the inference is legitimate that they were independent before the welding. If this was the first time that the welding had been done, what shall we say of that much earlier and vast "Nan-chao Kingdom" that is said to have reached from Tibet to Tongking, and from Kuei-chou to the valley of the Ganges? With slight deductions, here and there, the Shans as a race may have been so widely spread, but that they all belonged to one solid kingdom ruled over by a mesne-lord is doubtful. Neither is it certain that the six kings stayed welded together for any great length of time. It seems to have been a somewhat temporary condition of affairs due to the power of this Shan king, and perhaps to Chinese favoritism. If we can

\* It is quite possible that Yang-tsü-me (Möng-myen or Têng-yüeh) was settled by Shans from the eastward (Möng-t'ien) and not from the northward as commonly supposed. The occupation of the Tali valley by "river-savages" and their later expulsion would seem to indicate this.

trust a Shan writing, either during this king's reign or the next, the Shan king of Nan-chao called the Shan king of Möng-t'ien (Yünnan-sen) "our son," and the southern king called the northern "our father." These may be either consanguinal or political terms.\* Whatever they were, the same Shan writing declares that the two kingdoms were "equal in power and glory," and when the northern king wanted to send down his nephews to assume the rule of a Shan kingdom or province on the Cambodia River, eastward from Siam, he first asked and received the permission of the Shan king of this Möng-t'ien. All this red-tape would not have been necessary if Möng-t'ien at that time was only a department in the Nan-chao kingdom. Manifestly the amalgamation was not complete and the welding was badly done.†

But after the welding—such as it was—P'i-lo-t'ai inflicted a defeat on the T'u-fan, whom Mr. Parker identifies with the Tibetans. Soon thereafter, on account of routing the "Mi savages," whoever they may have been, the emperor "conferred" upon him the title of "King of Nan-chao," and gave him "a gold worked belt, an embroidered robe, and five other articles." Notice that after he had become a king indeed

\* Mr. Taw Sein Ko says: "They were, no doubt, political terms. The custom of one Shan Chief calling another a father, uncle, brother, etc., irrespective of age, still prevails in the Shan States. The terms indicate the political status of the States concerned. In the present instance, the King of Nan-chao, who was the 'father,' must have been superior in political status—or, according to the language of modern diplomacy, must have occupied a higher position in the Table of Precedence—than the king of Möng-t'ien, who was the 'son.'"

† Major Davies places the capital at this time at Meng-hua, at the head of the Red River, far to the eastward. That may have been the residence of the kinglet or governor, P'i-lo-t'ai, before the six provinces were united into the Nan-chao kingdom of that particular time. Major Davies says: "Meng-hua is celebrated in the ancient history of Yünnan as the scene of a deliberately planned murder, by which the Nan-chao kingdom was founded" (or perhaps reconsolidated after a split up). "At that time central Yünnan was divided into six little states, but Pi-lo-ko (P'i-lo-t'ai), the prince of Meng-hua, being a man of enterprising mind, invited his five royal neighbours to a feast. He had previously constructed a specially inflammable house of pine-wood, and having made his guests drunk, set fire to the building and burned them all. He thus combined the six kingdoms under his own rule and soon afterwards moved his capital to the Tali plain." A similar tale is told of the early Shans of the lower Cambodia River regions, as will soon appear. Both are highly improbable tales and may be pure fictions to explain the existence of Shan kingdoms, the early rise of which was unknown.

by the strength of his own arm, the emperor, like a benevolent despot, condescends to "confer" upon him the title that he had already acquired. It is like a cheerful non-resident university honouring itself by conferring a diploma on a distinguished scholar. The historical lesson here is most instructive as it is a line of policy which runs through all Chinese history. There can be no doubt that the Middle Kingdom was gradually strengthening her grip on this south-western province. There was much yet to do, however, before it became, more than in name, a component part of the empire.

On the death of this king, his adopted son, Kolofung, ascended the throne. His son was made governor of Meng-hua (where his grandfather had planned the murder). We are not quite sure of the sites of the earlier capitals of Nan-chao, but Kolofung's residence, we are told, was at Taho, near the modern Tali Fu. Having been insulted by a Chinese military governor, he revolted and killed him. A Chinese army sent to punish him suffered defeat at Peh-ngai, in the Tali valley, and withdrew. After gathering up the dead bodies and building a mausoleum over them, Kolofung threw in his lot with the Tibetans. The record states that he erected a stone at his palace door setting forth how it was that he had been forced into rebellion. The confession in it that his predecessors, for many generations, had submitted to China and his successors were permitted to do so again, must be read in the light of all the facts. According to Mr. Parker, the pronouncement read as follows: "My predecessors, generation after generation, submitted to China, and were repeatedly given titles and presents. My successors are permitted to revert to China. If a Chinese envoy should arrive, they can point to this tablet and purge my crime." That is Chinese bombast. We shall soon see that, from the end of the Han dynasty to nearly up to this time, the Chinese let Nan-chao ingloriously alone.

Going on with our story, we read that the Imperial resident of Kien-nan sent an army of one hundred thousand Imperial troops to chastise the Ai-laos of Nan-chao for



coquetting with the Tibetans. The number given may be greatly exaggerated. The army lost heavily *en route* by some contagious disease, here called "the plague," and the survivors were routed at Taho. Mr. Parker says that An-luh-shan, a Turk in the employ of China, who set himself up as emperor of Yen, rebelled at this time, and Kolofung seized the opportunity to set over his line fences to the westward. The positions taken and the tribes subdued are hard to identify in full. The places mentioned are Si-chou and T'sing-k'i Pass, and the tribes, Yueh-sih, Sun-chuan, and P'iau. As the pass was in western Ssu-ch'uan, and Mr. Parker declares that the P'iau were Burmans, we may infer that the region alluded to was Upper Burma and districts to the northward. Elsewhere he gives us this: "Chinese history tells us that Imousun's grandfather (this Kolofung) annexed the dominions of the Pyu (manifestly the P'iau above). . . . Nan-chao used to exercise a suzerainty over it (Burma) on account of its contiguity and by reason of the military strength of Nan-chao." . . . "Communication with the Pyu state, which was 79 journeys south (? west) of Yung-ch'ang, were opened by the Nan-chao king, Kolofung. When the Chinese speak thus, they invariably mean the centre or capital of a state."\* A description of one of the wild tribes is given. As they killed the wild boar and ate his flesh raw, and to the west of them the people covered their bodies, or a small part thereof, with the bark of trees, the progenitors of our modern friends, the Kachins, may be the tribes referred to. Some of them are more modest now and have lengthened out their skirts to a span or two.

If Nan-chao had once extended to Tibet, on the north-west, and to the valley of the Ganges, westward, Kolofung was only recovering lost ground, but that westward extension of Nan-chao may not be taken too seriously. If Nan-chao arms had been carried so far west, at the early date mentioned, we may believe that they accomplished no more than did the valorous general, Ma Yuan, in setting up a

\* Parker's *Burma*, pp. 14, 16, 17.

copper pillar at, or near, Yünnan-sen in A.D. 42, and less than his successor who "set it up once more" in A.D. 748 or thereabouts.\*

About A.D. 763, the king of Nan-chao built the city walls of Che-tung.† The record adds that Chu-koh Liang's inscription was there. This is the Chu-koh Liang who, we are told, practically created the third Han dynasty. The inscription was boastful: "If this stone falls, then the savages will be Chinese slaves; barbarians have an awe of our vengeance, and will always keep up this stone to protect themselves." It is practically certain that the Chinese, soon thereafter, withdrew from Nan-chao and did not return for centuries. Kolofung's revolt, the repeated defeat of Chinese armies, and other subsequent events, do not read as though the awe was very great (except for a short period under the next king) before the days of Prince Kublai.

Kolofung's own son had died, but following a custom that has come down to modern times among the Shans of appointing an heir-apparent during the lifetime of the king, in order that he might serve an apprenticeship, Kolofung associated with himself his grandson, "Imousun." This was in A.D. 779. The latter is said to have been shrewd and tactful and is credited with having some knowledge of letters. As the sons of his "high officers" were later put to school in Chengtu, the capital of Ssu-ch'uan, we may assume that Chinese letters are meant, but of this we cannot be sure.‡ Not long after this, though the exact date is not given, the great Kolofung died and was succeeded by this grandson. One of his first acts, with a force given as 200,000, and in conjunction with the Tibetans, was to

\* Captain Forbes says that, according to the Assamese native chronicles, a branch of the Tai (Shan) race made their way into the valley of the Brahmaputra, about A.D. 780 (twenty years after the time referred to above), and gradually made themselves masters of the whole of Assam. Manifestly he refers to the old Ahom records which cannot bear this interpretation. This will appear when we come to consider the movements of the Shans of Burma.

† Mr. Parker says that the name is obsolete, but as "Che" is an old Shan word for "city," and "Tung" was the name thereof, Möng-tung or Ching-tung, in central Yünnan, may be meant.

‡ It is possible that the Shans had letters of their own. The matter will be discussed later on.

organize a raid through the whole western frontier of Ssu-ch'uan. They are said to have posted this order: "We intend to take Shuh (Ssu-ch'uan) as far as the eastern prefecture, sending the workmen and artisans to Lhassa city and imposing a poll-tax of one piece of lustring." The account goes on to say that they then advanced and captured the city, gathering the inhabitants together and driving them in panic to the hills. "The city" would naturally mean the capital, Chengtu. The emperor, whose reign is given as 780—805, collected a large army and practically destroyed Imousun's hordes. The Shan king was now "in awe of Chinese vengeance," whether his predecessors and successors were or not. He "withdrew far to the southward to Yang-tsü-me." There is an indication here that Yang-tsü-me was not in the Tali valley but further south. This is another reason for the supposition that the site was near the modern Mōng-myen (Têng-yüeh). He walled in the city for a distance of fifteen li, and managed to keep the Chinese out, but had called a worse enemy in. The Tibetans, his spurious friends, taking advantage of his weakness, became dominant in his kingdom. They are said to have exacted heavy tribute and Imousun began to find things uncomfortable.

Fortunately there was at the Shan court a Chinese schoolmaster, whom Kolofung had admired for his genuineness and learning. Why was he there, if not to teach Chinese letters to the small fry of the royal family? However that may be, he suggested in a winsome way that the Tibetans were extortionate and that the Shan king might do well to fall again into the loving arms of the empire. Imousun began secret communications with the Chinese viceroy of Chengtu in Ssu-ch'uan. This was in A.D. 787. The Tibetans became suspicious and imprisoned a high officer's son who was with them as hostage. The Shan king was more incensed than ever and the following year took a decided stand. He wrote a long letter of confession on silk to the viceroy, charging against the Tibetans many tyrannies, and boldly made the amazing statement that "his unusual line of policy," in making the raid into Ssu-ch'uan, was due to the greed and insolence of a Chinese officer.

Against the Tibetans he charged: broken treaties, the frequent raising of troops, the prevention of all communication with China, the acceptance of heavy bribes, the fortifying of a position under the walls of his capital, usurpation of his revenues, a Tibetan guard about the king (Imousun), and casting disgrace upon his ancestors. The valhalla of his spirits-ancestral may be intended, for there is an indication that the Shans, like the Chinese, once worshipped the spirits of their ancestors.

In his letter of confession, Imousun goes on to say: "My great-grandfather (P'i-lo-t'ai) was the recipient of former Emperors' favours and his successors were confirmed in their kingly positions generation after generation." (As Imousun succeeded his grandfather direct, there had been but three generations, including himself.) "My people are acquainted with polite forms and music, all of which are the result of China's civilizing influence" (these were matters on which the Chinese set an extravagant value). "The T'u-fan (Tibetans) are treacherous and deceitful in every possible way, full of designs to my disadvantage. I, Imousun, am really anxious to reform, and to revert humbly to the Emperor." There is a little more that it may be well to quote, and much that there is no room for here, but before doing any more quoting it is well to note what is said here. Why did the Shan king refer back only to his great-grandfather? Before the latter's day, for several centuries, there is a complete blank in the record. In another place we see that a certain pillar was "set up once more" which was first erected between six and seven centuries before. There is a hint here that Chinese rule made a spurt into Yünnan in the first century of the Christian era, or possibly a century earlier, that it was withdrawn, and not resumed again seriously until the time of this "great-grandfather."\*

Now we may go on with our quotation: "I beg to be

\* Dr. Martin characterizes the period of Chinese history from A.D. 220 to 618 as one of "numerous partial or short-lived dynasties," and says that it was "a time of divisions, war and anarchy"—with "a tendency to lapse into barbarism."—*The Lore of Cathay*, p. 406. This may explain the silence. The south-westward spurt of the empire under the Han dynasty (B.C. 206—A.D. 220) seems also to have lapsed.

given power over the garrison posts of Kien-nan, Si-shan, and King-yuan provinces (a strip reaching northward to the province of Kan-suh), and that the commander-in-chief at An-si may pour in his troops in all directions, and the Uigour states be detached to plunder and raid wherever they can, so that the power of the Tibetans may be subdivided and broken." The letter was forwarded to the emperor who, having ascertained through spies the real state of things, accepted the offer.

The Shan king sent his son and an officer along with a Chinese envoy to swear a treaty at Tien-ts'ang Hill, which Mr. Parker says is north of Tali city. A copy of the treaty was sent to the emperor. It was probably written in Chinese by that Chinese schoolmaster who was admired for his genuineness and learning. Of this we cannot be certain, neither do we know what the terms of the treaty were, but that they were favourable to the Chinese cannot be doubted. Imousun now acted with speed and energy. He killed the Tibetan envoys and sent officers, with the Chinese envoy, to the emperor.

At this time, the Tibetans lost heavily in a battle with the Uigours (Turks of eastern Turkestan) and, unaware of what had taken place in Nan-chao, commanded Imousun to come to their aid with ten thousand men. Pretending to do so, he led against them a large army by forced marches. He surprised them and inflicted a "tremendous defeat." Five Tibetan princes were among the prisoners. In the following summer, he was recognized as "King of Nan-chao" (as the two previous kings had been before him). He received a gold seal inscribed "Reign 705—805." This was a round number to fill out the century. It was given in A.D. 794.\* The Chinese officers sent to confer the seal were received in right royal fashion. Imousun stood facing the north.

\* With respect to this particular seal or letters-patent Mr. Taw Sein Ko says: "It was customary to date such letters-patent from the time they were issued; but, in the present instance, an exception was made so that the dates might be in harmony with Imousun's own declaration. He stated that for three generations—roughly computed to last a full century—letters-patent had been received from the Chinese Emperor, and his later descendants were exhorted to procure theirs from the same source."

Earlier kings faced the east. This shows that at one time or another the Shans changed the king of Ts'u, or somebody in that direction, for the emperor as Protector, but just when this was only sinologists can determine. Imousun's little speech on receiving the seal may throw light upon it. He said, in part: "During the two reigns, A.D. 713—756, my great-grandfather and grandfather (his predecessor, Kolo-fung) both received patents as hereditary king. . . . My sons' sons and grandsons' grandsons will for ever be subject to China." The first date here corresponds closely with the first date on the seal (705).

It is possible that this is when the Shans first turned again to the emperor as Protector and Lord after the break referred to above—though they may have turned away from T'su, or some other strong state, to the eastward, some time before. When business was over, Imousun and the Chinese envoys sat down to drink to each other's good health and to say pleasant things. The envoys told Imousun, in substance, that it would pay him to be good, and Imousun promised to take such good advice to heart. It is said that among the presents sent back to the emperor, there was a sword, tempered with horse's blood, that had been girt by successive kings for seven generations. For the next three years, Imousun was busy subduing neighbouring savages.

In the year A.D. 799, Imousun proposed to unite with the Chinese forces to make another attack upon the Tibetans. There were delays, for one reason or another, and he did not set out till the spring of A.D. 801. There was much heavy fighting to recover ground that the Tibetans had filched from the Chinese and to carry the war into the enemies' country. "The Uigour armies swept their northern flank; the Chinese troops thundered at their east; and the Nan-chao warriors marched straight into their territory." Nan-chao got credit for "attacking the most vital points and taking the most prisoners and plunder." For this good service he received the emperor's congratulations. He paid a slight tribute to the emperor annually, and "the emperor was very civil to him." He died, after a very stormy reign, in A.D. 808, three years after the date on his

seal ran out. In estimating Tibetan influence in Yünnan, it is well to remember that the period covered by Tibetan subjugation was less than fourteen years, with a period of about the same length of friendly alliance during the preceding reign. This appears to have been the beginning and the end politically of Tibet in Yünnan.

Imousun was followed by three short and uneventful reigns. The fourth succeeding reign was marked by another raid into Ssu-ch'uan. The then reigning king, Li-yu, *alias* Feng-yu, is represented as having been not only very active and daring, with great influence over those under him, but of having had great reverence for China. It seems a little peculiar, therefore, that the commander-in-chief of his forces should have been permitted to lead an army into Ssu-ch'uan, to the very walls of the capital, surprising and capturing three districts on his way. The record states that he established himself for ten days in the western suburbs of Chengtu, behaving himself liberally toward the people and paying for everything he wanted—a thing so exceptional that it was well worth mentioning. He was not however so generous as he seemed, for, on his return, he took forcibly away "several myriad boys, girls, and artisans." From this date (829), we are told, "Nan-chao was on a par with China in matters concerning art, literature, and weaving." This statement must be taken with some qualifications. Many centuries before this time, these Shans of Nan-chao "understood how to dye gaily patterned fabrics and to manufacture rugs, cotton and fine hemp cloths, which they wove into patterns like figured damasks," and "wove fine and embroidered silk fabrics." That there was any general knowledge of literature, outside of the ruling families, is doubtful—but for that age, this restriction may have applied to many of the Chinese as well.\* We do not know and can

\* Of the Chinese even of our own day, Dr. Martin says: "Of those who can read understandingly (and nothing else ought to be called reading), the proportion is greater in towns than in rural districts. But striking an average, it does not, according to my observation, exceed one in twenty for the male sex and one in ten thousand for the female."—*The Lore of Cathay*, p. 300. Among the Shans of eastern Burma the proportion of the male sex that can read understandingly is twice as large as the figure given for the Chinese; and for the female, ten times as large.

only infer what arts, other than weaving, were intended, and, in any case, the knowledge thereof was due, in the mind of the Chinese writer, to the imported artisans. That the emperor never attempted to punish the Shan king, Li-yu, for the foregoing offence, and accepted, the next year, a written apology, is a striking comment on the inefficiency of the empire at that time.

The next twenty-five years were given up to war and rapine. There was for many years apparently constant raiding in Kuei-chou, Kuang-hsi, Kuang-tung, Tong-king and Anam. All of these, with the exception of Anam, must have been essentially Shan states at that time (and still contain a very heavy Shan population) but, like Nan-chao, they were doubtless a Chinese hinterland and the Chinese interfered to preserve the peace and maintain whatever prestige they may have had, just as they did in the British Shan states and Burma during the Mongol dynasty. With heavy loss in blood and treasure, the Chinese scarcely held their own. Then the scene shifts again to the province of Ssu-ch'uan. Here the Shan hordes raided the country and sacked several towns practically unhindered. The Chinese, according to the account, were busy packing the people into Chengtu, the capital. They occupied, it is said, every inch of standing room. The people suffered unutterable hardship, vast numbers died, and were buried wholesale in tumuli or barrows. On one occasion, during the defence of the city, when the Shans had begun to undermine the mud earthworks, the Chinese "filled jars with night-soil and dirty water in order to souse the savages, who were unable to remain under this." If the Turks had thought of it, the Bulgars might never have taken Adrianople. Unable to take the city, the Shans at last withdrew and, marching to the south again, captured Anam. Finally both sides were weary of war, but the Chinese were the first to sue for peace. A Chinese officer boldly wrote to the emperor advising this course, saying, in part, that when the imperial treasury was full of money, and the army fresh, they could not "save the situation," how much less could they do it with an empty treasury and with the army exhausted. The emperor



approved. Peace envoys sent to Nan-chao were successful in their mission; they promised, in the bargain, to give a queenlet which was a great inducement. The emperor proceeded to confer a title on a princess of the blood, and to betroth her to the king of "jungle savages." She was never sent, but the king could console himself. Chinese envoys knocked at his gate and sued for peace, while he held Anam in his hands. This was in the last quarter of the ninth century. "After this (from A.D. 888), China was given up to civil war, and relations with Nan-chao ceased." Elsewhere, Mr. Parker says: "The fact is the first Emperor of the Sung dynasty in the middle of the tenth century 'drew a line,' beyond which he was determined to have no political concern, and the Nan-chao state, now first called Tali, was quite independent up to the time of the Mongol inroads under Prince Kublai (1257), afterwards Kublai Khan." \*

The real extent, numbers and power of that old Nan-chao kingdom we do not know, except as we may draw inferences from its history. This history Mr. Parker has made known to us in the papers so freely quoted.

\* Parker's *Burma*, p. 22.

## SHANS ON THE LOWER CAMBODIA RIVER.

MENTION has already been made of a Shan kingdom called T'ien or Möng-t'ien, which M. Terrien claims was a westward extension of the old confederate state of Ts'u. He says that it reached westward to the central parts of Yünnan. A Shan manuscript, previously referred to, says that this kingdom extended westward to the Salween River. At what date it reached so far west we have at present no means of knowing. That it may have been before the dawn of the Christian era will appear as we go on with our story.

M. Garnier says: "The south-west angle of the province of Yünnan was occupied by the principality of Tien (T'ien), which extended to the city of Nanning, almost to the border of the lake of Yünnan, and was itself tributary to a great kingdom called Ma-mo. In the same region was the kingdom of Lao-chin. We must doubtless look on these countries of Tien and Lao-chin as Lao-tian principalities founded by emigrants of the Pe-yone (Pai-i or Pai-yi) tribes." "Ma-mo" can here be only a corruption of "Möng-mao," but probably the latter was tributary to the former, except for one short period, as we shall see in due time.

If all these blind men who have seen the elephant are right, T'ien covered the eastern, central, western and south-western parts of Yünnan, and itself was the source, through migrations, of the "Pai-yi" (Lao) tribes of the "Lao-tian" states. This helps us a little, but does not give us any dates for the south-westward migrations. A date may be surmised, after the evidence has been recorded. The witness must be briefly examined, for we wish to get at the Shans of Burma in particular. But the Shans of Burma, in the first instance, came from Yünnan, so it paid to get at their numbers and status there; and many of

them came later from these Cambodia River Shans, not only came from there, but came as conquerors and usurpers, so a paragraph or two must be given to them—then we may know better where we are at.

Mr. Hallett\* assumes that the Shan race of the Lower Cambodia River region was Karen. In this the great scholar seems to be utterly wrong. He bases his conclusion on the evidence of two words: "Yun" (Yon) and "Tchen"; but he admits that the former term was applied to them by the Burmans and is no longer used, if indeed it was ever in vogue among them. But, did the Burmans ever apply the term to the Karens at all? Where is there the slightest trace of such usage? The Burmans, and the Shans of the British Shan states, now apply the name to the Shans of Chieng-mai, and thereabouts. It may be also that the Burmans sometimes called the regions to the eastward "The Great Yon Country"; but that region was occupied by the Shans long before the Burmans knew or could have known anything about it. There were large Shan towns there when as yet the Burmans were a batch of half-baked tribes in the basin of the Irrawaddy and to the northward. The name was never in vogue either among the Shans or Karens of that vast region. It is an appellation given by the Burmans to the Shans of northern Siam in comparatively modern times.†

\* *Historical Sketch of the Shans.*

† Burmans read of a priest sent to the Yona country, at the time of the third council under Asoka, and not finding the name among the classical names of places either in their own or the Talain kingdoms, stuck it on to the Lao state of Chieng-mai. The conversion of the name into a monosyllable followed the customary process.

See Em. Forchhammer, *Notes on the Early History and Geography of Burma*, p. 13.

Mr. Taw Sein Ko gives a history of this word "Yun" (the Shan, "Yon") which is new to me. He says: "The Pāli appellation 'Yona' or 'Yonaka,' from which 'Yun' (Yon) is said to have been derived, is the name of the ancient Greek Kingdom of Bactria in Central Asia. The Pāli word 'Yona' is derived from the Greek 'Ionia,' while the Burmese word 'Yun' is derived from the Chinese word 'Jung,' a name applied to ancient Yünnan. 'Yün-nan,' in modern Chinese, means 'Clouds of the South'; but the first syllable is evidently a modification of 'Jung.'"

This may account, in part, for the cloudy aspect of the whole question. He classes the "Jung," along with the Ai-lao and the Pa-i, as a Shan tribe.—*Burmese Sketches*, p. 16.

As to "Tchen," which occurs in Tchen-tching and Tchen-la, it is only a variant of "Chieng" in Chieng-mai; of "Keng" in Keng-tung (pronounced Tseng-tung by the K'öns of that place), the "Kiang-tung" of Mr. Hallett. So that his contention that "Tchen" is but a variant of the Burmese appellation, "Karen," does not hold water. Moreover, Keng, Tchen, Chieng, Kiang, and like forms of the word, is a political and not a racial word. Mr. Hallett is quite correct in saying, as so many have said before and since, that the Karen traditions connect them with China, but China is a region wider than the district spoken of here, and the traditions refer to regions further north. The earlier home of the Karens seems to have been to the north, and probably far to the north, rather than to the south of the Yangtse, and they are almost certainly more recent intruders into the Indo-Chinese peninsula than the Mons or the Shans.\* Like the Shans, they are a light complexioned people, and both are intruders in the southern locations where they now are found.

On the assumption that the Karens were the pre-Shan race of the lower Cambodia River region, Mr. Hallett quotes the following tale from a Möng-yong (Yawng) chronicle (or more likely misquotes it because of his wrong preconceptions): "On the advance of the Yun (Yon) Shans, the Karen king, whose subjects were numerous, having accepted their allegiance, allowed them to settle in his country and build several large towns, among which were Kiang Hung, Kiang Tung, Kiang Tsen, Muang Lem, and a fortified town called Kiang Chang (Ving Chang). As the Shans became numerous, and therefore stronger, they became dissatisfied with their vassalage, and determined to throw

\* Mr. Taw Sein Ko gives the following as the order of the ethnic movements in Burma: (i) the Negritos; (ii) the Mons; (iii) the Karen-Taunthu and the Tai; (iv) the Tibeto-Burmans.

One of the Negrito dialects (Car Nicobarese), it is claimed, is related to the Mon-Khmer of Burma and Cambodia. This claim, according to this authority, "appears to indicate that the Negritos were partly decimated, partly absorbed, and partly driven out by the Mon-Khmers, and that the conquerors imposed their language on the conquered, who survived and accepted the Mon polity. The fusion of blood with the Negritos appears to account for the blue-black indigo colour of the Was, and the dark colour of the Mon-Khmers of ancient Cambodia."

off the Karen yoke. A son of the prince of Kiang Hung who had been allowed to build and occupy the fortified town of Kiang Chang, invited Phya Ngam, the then ruling Karen king, to a banquet, and having closed the gates of the town, slew him and all his attendants. This, according to the Muang Yong (Yawng) chronicle, occurred long before the days of Gautama, B.C. 543." Now, for a comment or two: Much of this territory, we now know, was inhabited by Mon rather than by Karen tribes. The date given is manifestly legendary, for all races of the Indo-Chinese peninsula were bookless for nearly a thousand years after this date, and being legendary, is of little historical value. Phya Ngam, the name of the king, is a pure Shan name, of this there can be no doubt whatever. It is inferable that he was not a Karen at all, but a Shan, if any such king ever existed, and any inference can be drawn worth drawing.\*

I must call upon my witness for a little more evidence, but before doing so, to make clearer what he may say, let us remember that a wide territory, south of all the towns mentioned, was called, two thousand years ago, Lam-ap by the Anamites, and Yueh-cheng and Lin-y by the Chinese, and still further to the south was Tchen-ching, the modern Cochin-China. Now, Mr. Hallett:

"According to Garnier, Phan-ho-dat reigned in Lin-y in A.D. 413; Phan-dzeuong-mai in 431; Phu-long in 436; and an army of the latter was commanded by Phan-con-sha-dat. P. Legrand de la Liraye remarks that 'Dzeuong-mai' is the Anamite for Chieng-mai, which is a pure Shan name. He was too modest. He might have admitted, without a blush, that they were all Shan. 'Phu-long' certainly is, and 'Phan-ho-dat' may be compared with the Siamese 'Pha-pa-lat-chu,' and other similar names. This all show that there may have been a large Shan population along the lower Cambodia River long before the Karens ever saw that country (if any of them have ever

\* This is Major Davies' story over again of the burning of the five kings and the founding or refounding of the Nan-chao kingdom, and if there is any truth in it at all, it almost certainly refers to a struggle among the various Shan chiefs of that locality for predominance; such strife for mastery was common among Shan chiefs, and resulted in temporary consolidation of otherwise independent states.

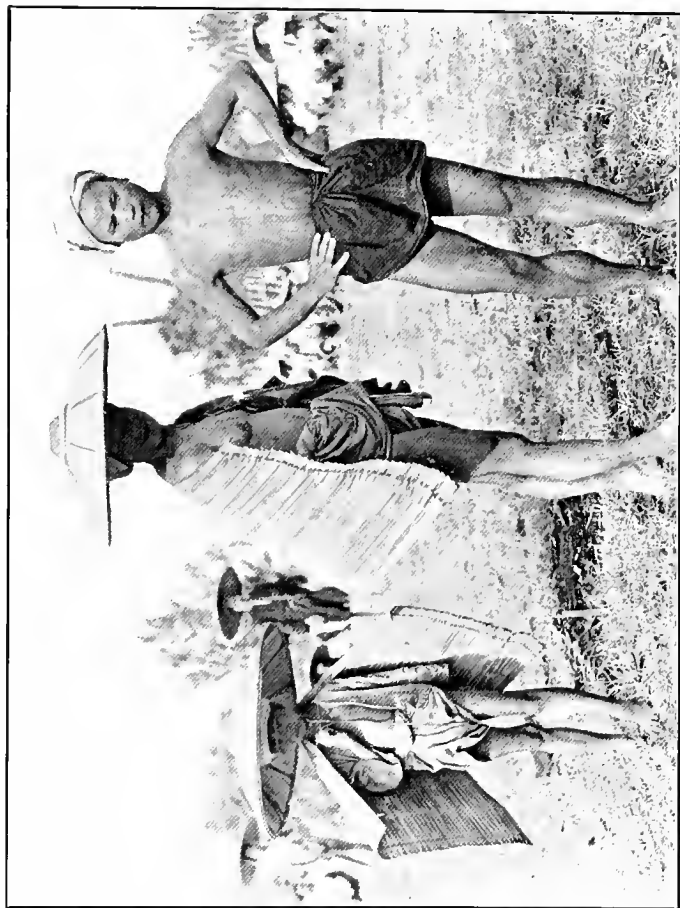
seen it at all). This lands us just where we were before —*i.e.*, just nowhere."

The next statement of our learned friend throws more light on the case. He says, in substance, that the non-tattooing branch of the Shans pushed down to the southward (while their compatriots were occupying Keng-hung) into the districts south-west of Tongking. Their kingdoms were already in existence there, he claims, before the founding of Labong, and other towns in the Lao country of northern Siam, and sets the date for the founding of Labong at A.D. 574. The reference to tattooing is impertinent, as it is most certain that no branch of the Shans tattooed at that time. The statement however does make it clear that the basin of the Cambodia River was occupied by the Shans before they spread over into the basin of the Me-nam, in Siam.

Dr. Dodd (writing in 1908 of the Chieng-mai Shans) says: "They came from the Ai-lao country, their rulers bearing such names as Lao-chuang, Lao-Mēng, etc. Twenty-five successive rulers bring us down to the time of Hpya Mang Rai, whose son conquered the Wa people of Kengtung 665 years ago."

To found kingdoms, multiply, and send forth new colonies, must have taken a long time, probably several centuries. We may therefore set the time for the Shan occupation of the lower Cambodia River regions as early as the beginning of the Christian era at the very latest. How much earlier they may have been there it would be hazardous even to conjecture. Under Indian architects, Shan coolies may have mingled with Khmers, for aught that we know, in the building of the great temple of Angkor. Of one thing only are we certain: even Angkor, magnificent in its ruins, is not so amazing as the denseness of our ignorance. We are compelled to deal with inferences and mere guess-work. Incidentally, Mr. Hallett says that "Labong was built one thousand and ninety-three years after the foundation of the town of Mone" (Möng-nai), in the Southern Shan States. Unfortunately this cannot be true; if it were, it would be illuminating.

The numbers and power of these southern Shans must have been considerable, if they conquered Tchen-ching



SHANS, SHOWING TATOING AND RAIN COVERS.





and parts of Tchen-la, in A.D. 707, as Mr. Hallett affirms. He further testifies: On the death of the king of Kiang-tsen, the king of Kiang-tung (in the British Shan states) seems to have been acknowledged ruler of the Yon, or Chieng-mai, Shans; for in 707 the son of the king of that kingdom conquered the northern half of Cambodia, settled there with a horde of Shans, and drove the inhabitants to the south amongst the Siamese, who were then in possession of the country to the south of the Great Lakes. The first wave of the Yon Shans thus descended to the neighbourhood of the Gulf of Siam. From this moment the people of Cambodia were known by their present name of "Khmer." The name is therefore manifestly from the Shan "Kha-mö," pronounced much like "Khmer," meaning "Fugitives." The reference to the Siamese is peculiar, for our learned witness himself, later on, declares that the Siamese empire may be said to have commenced at the founding of Ayuthia in 1350. There was a more ancient town there, built by the Mons of Cambodia, and it must be this Mon wave to the westward to which Mr. Hallett refers.

Our witness shall speak once more, and then this brief reference to the Shans of that region must close. "The Lao principalities were also growing in power, and contracting Tchen-ching on the west. The seventeenth monarch of the Lao kingdom of Vien Chang, or Lan-sang, who had married a daughter of the king of Cambodia, came to the throne about 1350, and carried on many wars. By 1373 the Laos had arrived at a great degree of splendour; a census taken at this time gave for this kingdom three hundred thousand heads of houses, not counting slaves and mountaineers. One of the grandchildren of the king who was then reigning married a daughter of the king of Siam, and another married a daughter of the king of Chieng-mai."

For my purpose here, it is not necessary to follow further the history of these Shans. So much has been given because the history of the Shans of Burma is bound up with that of their neighbours and kinsmen, the Shans of Yünnan and of the Cambodia River regions—from whom they sprang and with whom they have had to do.

## SHANS OF BURMA OR THE MAO KINGDOM.\*

### I.—THE LEGENDARY PERIOD, FROM EARLY TIMES TO THE MIDDLE OF THE TENTH CENTURY.

NEARLY every one who has had anything to say of the early history of Burma has told us of an attack on "Old Tagaung" (Ta Kawng). Burman legends call the enemy "Tarok-Taret," the former of which is their present name for the Chinese. It was formerly called a Burman city, the oldest city of the Burmans; later writers assume that it was founded by north Indian invaders. It is of much interest, and may be of no little historical importance, to notice that a Shan chronicle claims that Ta Kawng was an old Shan capital and that its kings had connections with India. The name itself is manifestly pure Shan, meaning "Drum Ferry." With this may be compared Mōng Kawng (Mogaung) meaning "Drum Town" (or Country); and many other such Shan names. The bricks found at Ta Kawng, with

\* The Shans may never have had any racial or geographical name to cover this region as a whole. I have already, in a former footnote, pointed out that the "Pang" of M. Terrien; the "Pang" of the Chinese, as in Mu-pang; the "Pong" of Pemberton, as in Mōng-pong; and the "Pawng" of the Cambodia River Shans, as in Tai-pawng, may all be one and the same name, and possibly the racial and geographical name for the Cis-Salween districts. My playful fancy has done a heap of funny business in the matter of conjectures, but is not so reckless as to assert that "Mōng-pawng" was really the Shan name for this whole region—but it looks like it. We need a name, and "Mōng-mao" is fairly satisfactory, for a prince of Mao was the only Shan that ever united these squabbling states into one solid kingdom; still the Shans themselves never used the name for other than the small state which now bears that name. The Hsenwi chronicle says that the original name was "Hsen-hse Man-se," but the Hsenwi writer hooked on to "Mōng-che-chao" or "Mōng-se-long," a Shan name for Nan-chao. This chronicle hooked on to everything in sight, as we shall soon see. The big thundering classical "Kambawsa-sengni-kawsampi" that the North Hsenwi *Sawbwa* lets off to dazzle and daze and dumbfound all comers is, of course, a late Buddhistical importation.

Indian markings, prove but little either one way or another, there are too many ways in which to account for them.

Considering the wide expansion of Nan-chao, its political organization, its vast superiority in military power in those early days, when the Burmans were a mere conglomeration of wild tribes, wild as the Chins, it can scarcely be denied that the Shan legend is as good as any. It is better than any other: that the Shans occupied the basin of the Upper Irrawaddy long before there were any Burmans there and were the dominant power in that region until comparatively recent times is not open to doubt.

As to the name "Tarok": this, as stated, is the present Burmese name for the Chinese; but as the event took place, according to tradition, "about the year 700 B.C.," it is reasonably certain that the Burmans could not have known anything about it at first hand at that time. They may therefore be repeating a legend which came to them from alien sources—though not necessarily mistaken in the name. The date given was more than three centuries before the confederate state of Ts'in set over her line fences into Ssu-ch'uan. The only other confederate state of China that could by any possibility have had fish to fry in Burma was Ts'u, and she was barbarian—not really Chinese. Relying on the findings of sinologists, recent writers hold that the traditional date is by far too early and that the event took place in the first century B.C., during the Han dynasty. Mr. Cocks states the case in this way: "The invasion seems to be antedated by about six centuries, and the invaders were probably Shans from the hill-country east of the Irrawaddy, driven downwards by the pressure of the great rebellion in China in the first century B.C." If this, in the main, be so, why deny that the Chinese themselves were the aggressors? The Chinese, during the reign of Wu Ti, conquered Ssu-ch'uan and western Yünnan (about 108 B.C.).\* It is quite certain that Nan-chao was subjugated. During the Han dynasty not only did Chinese suzerainty make a spurt into Yünnan, but may have extended their aggressions

\* See Parker's *China, Her History, Diplomacy, and Commerce*, pp. 19—23.

into Burma ; in fact much of Upper Burma was then held by Shans who were a westward extension of the Nan-chao kingdom. Neither is it necessary to assume that the Shans were " driven downwards by pressure." The Chinese did not always extend their over-lordship in that way. The Shans may have willingly acknowledged the emperor as Protector because they could not help it, or because it was for their own advantage, and then have co-operated with the Chinese in the westward invasion. Such a thing actually took place right here in Burma during the Mongol-Chinese dynasty, at the sack of Pagan. If the real date was the first century B.C., " Tarok-Taret " may be a picturesque and playful appellation for a mixed horde of Chinese and Shan invaders.

There is some more circumstantial evidence here worthy of note. That Chinese Emperor, Wu Ti, made such an impression on the Shans that his name has been used by them ever since as the official title of all Chinese rulers. This is true not only of the Shans but of the Burmans as well. That did not merely happen, without any definite cause at all. It is inferable that the Burmans, together with the Shans, felt the grip of that conquering hand.

Whether Ta Kawng was or was not a Shan town has nothing to do with it, for it is characteristic of all Shan history to be constantly at war among themselves.

There is another indication that the Burmans, as well as the Shans, were in vassalage to China at that time. Chinese vassals " face " towards their suzerain. The Shans have always done the same, as we have already seen. Now it is most significant that the Burmans ever since some early day have " faced " the east. They must have been the vassals of either Nan-chao or China when that custom was first established. Considering the wide extension and dominant power of Nan-chao, it is quite probable that Burma was directly tributary to that kingdom ; but Nan-chao was tributary to China—and remained at least nominally so till the thirteenth century, when she became a component part of the empire. Grant that Burma was involved in the conquest of Nan-chao, and that would explain, as nothing else does, the early rise of the Burman custom of " facing "

towards the east. Even this is not all: the evidence is cumulative. The official titles of early Burman kings are significant, and must be taken into account. "Pyu Saw Ti" is the title which was assumed by the third king of Pagan (167—242). *Pyu* is the tribal name; *Saw* is unquestionably the Shan *Sao* (or *Chao*) meaning "King," the Chinese word *Ti* is here equal to "Emperor." That full title, equal to "Pyu-King-Emperor," was born of experience. It was not an accident. It shows the high place that the Nan-chao king and his suzerain, the Chinese Emperor, had in his own mind. The Pyu king would never have chosen that alien title if he had had a title of his own worth a wet dish-clout. Linking the two titles (*Sao* and *Ti*) together and shackling on the Pyus, as an empty, was clever shunting. Pagan was the western terminal of a political railway, and Nan-chao was what Major Davies might call "the connecting link." "King" (Shan)—"Emperor" (Chinese)—of the "Pyus" (Burmese) is a short chapter in the political history of the times, and the sections are arranged in the climatic order, "Pyu-Saw-ti."

Even the "Kan(raj)agi" and the "Kan(raj)nge" of Burmese chronicles are only the K'un-long and the K'un-lai of Shan history (of whom more will be said further on). The Burmese stole those names, which shows that they had no more conscientious scruples against plagiarizing than I have. Moreover, Yunnan and Burma, since nobody knows when, have been treated by the Chinese writers as a geographical and political unit. As to early Shan domination in Burma, Mr. Taw Sein Ko says: "Up to the time of Anaw-rata (eleventh century), the eastern bank of the Irrawaddy and its hinterland were under Shan domination. Yamèthin, Meiktila, Magwe, Kyauksè, Mandalay, and the territory to the north of it were all subject to the Shans. I am inclined to think that the Shan domination extended southward to the latitude of Prome, in the early centuries of the Christian era." We see now why Ta Kawng may have been a Shan, rather than a Burman or Indian town. The Indians may have invaded the country and settled there, at one time or another, but the town is "Drum Ferry" to this day.

Phayre, Hallett, Cocks, and other writers, connect the destruction of Ta-gaung with the first settlement of the Shans in Burma. None of them gives any substantial reason for this. A raid is not a settlement. It is also curious that after assuming that the Shans attacked and sacked the city, they should go on and make the further assumption that the invaders beat a retreat and settled in the valley of the Shwe-li (or Mao) river. Having destroyed the chief city in the basin of the Irrawaddy basin, why did they not settle there? It is certainly possible that Ta-gaung (Ta Kawng) was itself a Shan town and that the Shans were already there. Whether it was destroyed by Chinese, by Chinese and Shans, or by Shans alone, signifies nothing. It is one of the peculiarities of Shan history that they were perpetually quarrelling among themselves. That is the way in which the Nan-chao kingdom was consolidated; wars were common between the Siamese, Laos and the Cambodia River Shans; the latter also consolidated their kingdom as the Nan-chao king did his; and the Shan states of Burma were keeping their hand in when the "Meek" inherited this part of their earth.

Phayre, in his *History of Burma* (page 6), says: "The Tai or Siamese branch of the Indo-Chinese peoples, called Shan by the Burmese, Max Müller considers, were the first to migrate from their original seat in Central Asia towards the south, and to settle along the rivers Mekong, Menam, Irrawaddy, and Brahmaputra." This cannot be; the Mons certainly preceded them. Certain of the Mon tribes, like the *Wa*, betray by their stature and complexion that they descended from mixed Mon and Negrito parentage. The taller and much fairer Shans bear no such mark.

Colonel G. E. Gerini states that "a new racial element . . . from the centre of China . . . followed . . . into Yünnan . . . some three or four centuries before the Christian era. It . . . penetrated into the northern parts of both Burma and Siam, where it further extended its influence. These invaders were parts of the people denominated Lao, or Ai-lao,"\* *i.e.*,

\* See *Directory for Bangkok and Siam*, 1910.

Shan. If he is right as to his dates, the Shans could scarcely have been the first to settle along the Upper Irrawaddy. Mon tribes preceded them ; but there is no certain indication that the Burmans did. But is the learned Colonel sure of his dates? It may be inferable that when Ts'in, the most western of the ancient confederate states of China, found occupation in extending her territory (376 B.C.) to the south-westward at the expense of Shuh, a vast dominion corresponding to the modern Ssu-ch'uan and also a little later in extending her dominion to the southward by a partial conquest of Ts'u, the Shans driven out, if indeed any of them were driven out, found asylum in Yünnan ; but to suppose that states, broken up, disorganized, and weak, should choose such a time to enter upon extensive wars of conquest and undertake national expansion, is contrary to the ordinary laws of national growth. It is far more likely that the Shans made their westward invasions and westward settlements in days of prosperity and power. They may have first settled in Yünnan, and made excursions into Burma, and Siam, at this time. There seems to be little certainty of it. For aught that we know they may have entered Yünnan at a much earlier date, and must have done so, if they were the builders of old Ta Kawng.

Like the Burmans, the Shans, in their legends, take delight in giving very early dates for the founding of their old towns, vestiges of which may be found in nearly all of the so-called "Shan States." But, these legends are manifestly post-Buddhistic, and created to flatter the pride of Shan kings and kinglets who would connect their origin with the great Rajas of India. It seems singular, therefore, that a writer of such acumen as Mr. Hallett should refer seriously to Shan chronicles, quoted by Ney Elias, mentioning that the town of Mōngnai was founded B.C. 519 ; Hsenwi, B.C. 441 ; and Hsipaw, B.C. 423. If we could depend upon these traditions, all would be clear sailing—but we can't.

Traces of the walls and moats of old cities are found in nearly every large valley of these Shan states. In some

instances the walls are well defined and a few bricks may remain, and the moats are only half filled in : these were Shan towns. In other cases, the walls are only low ridges of earth and the moats mere depressions, scarcely traceable, but sufficient to indicate that the places were once the sites of comparatively large towns : these are said to have been built by the pre-Shan inhabitants.

Discarding its legendary preamble, the Hsipaw chronicle states that her ancient town, called Ong-pawng, was built in 58 B.C. This date, in the nature of the case, is somewhat doubtful, but there is nothing historically impossible about it. If letters had been introduced into the basin of the Irrawaddy by that time, the princes of Ong-pawng might easily have employed scribes, whether they had any letters of their own or not.

Hsipaw (Ong-pawng) is in the western part of the Shan highlands and, as the Shan occupation of these states was certainly from the eastward, we may reasonably surmise that some of these old cities, nearer the present Chinese border, were built a little earlier. Some of them, indeed, may have been built in Gautama's time, or even before, for aught that we now know to the contrary ; but we should not forget that the record of their having been built at that early day is legendary and not historical. The Shans guess at it, and so must we. Unfortunately the Hsipaw chronicle shows signs of tampering, or possibly it was manufactured in comparatively modern times, like antique furniture, and palmed off as the original article. According to the record, each of the first ten kings reigned, on an average, nearly 37 years ; the average reign for the first forty kings was nearly 30 years ; while the last seven, immediately before an Ong-pawng prince was called to Ava, reigned, on an average, only  $11\frac{1}{2}$  years. This looks as though the record becomes more reliable as the reigns get shorter. Again, this chronicle asserts that a certain king sent his younger brother to take over the government of Mōng-mao (A.D. 207). The brother's name is given as "Sao Hkam-hsung." Turning to Mao history of this period for the name, to substantiate the date, we find—a blank. Even the traditional history of Mao, as it



comes to us in the existing Shan records, began much later.\*

Of the time when the Shans first settled in these states, we know next to nothing. Of the pre-Shan inhabitants, we know even less. After weeding out the impossibles, a conjecture may be attempted. That the Burmans, the Karens and the Kachins were not the pre-Shan inhabitants is so certain that not one of them need be considered.

The Palaungs, in their hotch-potch of myths called the "Palaung History," say that they were the pre-Shan inhabitants of the Mao valley and of regions roundabout. There are some things here to be considered. The record starts in by saying that there was a garden in China, which was ten days' journey in extent each way; that there was a mountain in the centre of the garden on the top of which the primeval Chinese hammered out the thunderbolts of the storm gods; that there was a hole in the top of the mountain from which a female naga (serpent or dragon) issued once in every three years, in the form of a beautiful maiden, to bask in the sun; that the Nam Lao (Rice-Spirit River) flowed by the base of the mountain; that a sun-prince came down, had union with the naga princess, and from them the Palaungs descended. Now this was all in China. Then we are told where in China the Nam Lao was; it was the upper part of the Shwe-li River; and its lower part was called Nam Mao (Drunken River). It could not stand the spirit and got drunk further down. Later we are told that the Palaungs inhabited the districts roundabout the Mao valley; then we are told that they inhabited the valley itself, and built the city of Selan.† Further on the record declares that the Chinese came down with an army, conquered the Palaungs, and the latter fled.

The record goes on to say that the Chinese, at that time, built there the city, "Kaw Tali" (the original Tali), which

\* If the Shans of Burma had letters and a literature and kept historical records during this period, they were later destroyed in devastating wars. Their own history, previous to the Shan invasion from the southward, soon to be mentioned, is purely traditional; with the possible exception of this Hsipaw chronicle.

† Shan records say that this city was built by a Shan king in the thirteenth century.

was not there at all, but over in northern Yünnan. From the Mao (or Shwe-li) valley, the Palaungs, according to their myths, came, *viâ* the Wa states, to their present tea hills in the Shan states. Out of all this ignorance of history and geography, and the river that got drunk on rice-spirit, the record is little more than a bar-room of inebriated fancies and metaphorical intoxication.

That the composer of this wonderful record intended to put the origin of the Palaungs in south-western China, there is no sufficient reason to doubt. The mere mention of Tali is worthy of notice. It is not mentioned in any Shan record of this period. When Kolofung's father took Taho (probably the original Tali), and established his grandson there as prince, he "drove out the river-savages." The river-savages there now are Minchias and, like the Palaungs, are a Mon tribe.

"Minchia" is said to mean "native family," which is not illuminating; but their language shows that they must have been originally a Mon tribe, now mixed with Shans and Chinese. It is quite possible that some of the Palaungs are descended from those river-savages. An event of that kind is a thing that would cling in a tradition, and something of the kind is necessary to account for the mention of Tali in the record.\* Mr. Thornton says that a certain Palaung sub-chief showed him a curiously wrought kawng (drum), made in northern Siam, and kept to show that at least that clan came from that region. Putting these two things together, we may assume tentatively that some of the Palaungs came from northern Yünnan, and that others came from northern Siam. This might help to explain the separation of the Palaungs into two main divisions (Rumai and Pale). According to these events, the Palaungs are confessedly modern intruders. However, the record itself, ignoring the events, claims that one dynasty alone of Palaung chiefs, after the tribe settled in their tea hills, endured through 999

\* Mr. Taw Sein Ko says that "Minchia" or "native family" is the nearest approach to autochthones or the aboriginal inhabitants of a country, and that the Mons, as represented by the Minchias and Palaungs, must have occupied the regions about the modern Tali Fu.

generations, another for 222 generations, and a third for 777 generations. Allowing thirty years for each generation, that would be—but you can figure it out yourself. “I could ordinarily,” as Mark Twain says, “but I fell down yesterday and hurt my leg.” The Suffragettes, Irish Home Rule, the Chinese Republic, the Tower of Babel, the Garden of Eden, and the Troglodites are all alike current news, with leaded headlines, in comparison. No one wants to say that the Palaungs lie, but they are very keen sportsmen. They may be ruled out along with the Kachins and other improbables, if not impossibles.\*

There is little or no indication that what are known as Was, Las, or Lawas ever occupied districts much west of their present habitat. Of tribes now in the Shan states, we have left the Riangs or Yangs (Yang-lam and Yang-hsek) as possibles. They may be a remnant of the pre-Shan

\* Mr. A. A. Cameron says: “The various Palaung tribes have slightly different accounts of their origin, but they all agree in saying that they came from the north and north-east, this land being variously called Sak-hkung Lungto, Möng La-pun La-pawn, Hu-kawn Hu-kio, and Hu-kawn Hu-kung, and various other names. The last two are the most significant—the meaning of Hu-kawng Hu-kung, in Shan, being the sources of Nam Kawng and Nam Kung rivers, the former doubtless being the same as the Me Kawng, while Kio is the name for the Irrawaddy. It would therefore appear that somewhere near the sources of the Mekawng and the Irrawaddy rivers marks the locality where the various clans of Palaungs had their original home.” Of the Humai (Rumai) clan, he further says, “They state they came from Sak-hkong in the east and camped in Möng-wa in Hsipaw.”

Fortunately Mr. Cameron's horse is perfectly sound—except that two or three of his legs are stuck on in the wrong place, and the head and tail are missing. Sak-hkong is doubtless some place on the Hkong or Salween River, and is in the east. La-pun La-pawn are, of course, the La of (Měng)pun (Möng)pawn, which are only the Chinese and Shan pronunciation of the same name of the same place, about lat. 24°, long. 99°, in the Měng-hung or Möng-hom district of central Yunnan. This agrees with the Taung-peng Palaung historical tradition that the Palaungs came *viâ* the Wa (La) country. “Hu-kawng” is north Kawng, as distinguished from Möng Kawng (Mo-gaung), and is in the Upper Chindwin valley. Hu-kio does refer to the upper (northern) reaches of the Irrawaddy, but this tradition was probably borrowed from the Kachins, just as the Palaungs of Taungpeng have borrowed from the Shans. I think he is also mistaken in saying that “the last two,” the names referring to the Upper Chindwin and Upper Irrawaddy rivers, are the most significant. The most significant reference here is to the Las (Was) for it agrees with the more prevalent tradition.

“Möng-wa” means, of course, the Wa states; but as a Hsipaw man, I protest that the Wa states are not in Hsipaw. We here are not related to the head-hunting Was.

See *Burma Census Report*, 1911, Part I, p. vi.

inhabitants or they may be tribes related to the Was or Las who migrated into this region after Shan occupation. They have all been converted to Buddhism, and affiliate with the Shans. They are not, however, what the Shans themselves call the pre-Shan race. To the latter they give the name of Hpai. Who these Hpais were is what we now wish to ascertain. The Hpais, the Shans say, inhabited all of these Shan states, and on the incoming of the Shan invaders, they were driven to the south and south-westward. According to the Shans, they left footprints behind them, in the vestiges of old cities, which may be found in every large valley of the Shan states. There are tumuli also that are attributed to these Hpais. They were made cone-shaped, or as truncated cones, from fifteen to twenty cubits in diameter, and had a ditch dug around them, which probably supplied the earth for the cone. These are somewhat common westward from Hsipaw and in north Hsenwi. They have suffered much from the wash and waste of time, and now are from two to four feet high, with the ditches from two to four feet deep. It is sometimes said that they may have been made by the Chinese during their military expeditions. The chief objection to this view is that they are found, with few exceptions, not on but away from the regular lines of travel; sometimes in the hills where it is unlikely that an invading army would bury their dead, and the Chinese seldom, if ever, bury their dead in that way.

But who were the Hpais? Were they Mongol Tartars, Tibeto-Burmans, Lao-Shans, Mon-Khmers, or what? Hold the breath for the answer: "The Hpais were any race of savages." There you have it. Now we know. It is a comfort to have the matter cleared up and for ever settled. We might say of them what our learned friend, M. Terrien, said of the Shans: "An ethnological hypothesis which would make the Hpai race the outcome of an intermingling in irregular proportions of Mons, Negritos, and Chinese, would not be objectionable in any way." Of course any other "hypothesis" would do just as well. It may be that they were one of the Lost Tribes, or the Cave-Dwellers, or

Gutta-Percha, or Guano; the last, as M. Terrien says, "would not be objectionable in any way." \*

It may also be said, in passing, that Hpai is the same word as Hpi (or Bi) in Bilu. Some good people have mistakenly supposed that the Bilus were giants or ogres, or fish or fowl, or anything but human beings. They were the "early savages" of this country, pre-Burman and pre-Shan. The Shans have a word for ogres. It is hpi-hpai, *i.e.*, "the spirits of the savages." That the Hpais were Mon tribes, like the Talains, is believable. That Mon tribes occupied south-western China, Anam, Cambodia, Siam, and southern Burma in pre-Burman and pre-Shan days is reasonably certain. It is highly probable that they stretched right across Upper Burma to the Bay of Bengal as well.

The history of the Shans of British Burma, if it may indulgently be called a history, begins—as the histories of most peoples do—with a legend; we may say legends, for there are several of them. If it was all work and no play that made Jack so dull, all fact and no fancy may make a book dull too. We may spend a little time over one or two of the fables of the early Shans of Burma; in fact, we must, or skip the period altogether. These fables are all that we possess of this period, and there is at least one somewhat important thing in them to account for. I have already referred to the naga-myth of Kiu-lung, and there said that it was like the naga-myths of the various Mon tribes and of the Shans. Captain Forbes, in his book on the *Languages of Further India*, speaks of them under the title of the "Mon-Anam Myths." There is not room here

\* Mr. Taw Sein Ko says that the Hpais, as a pre-Shan race, appear to be a Mongol Tartar tribe, judging by the form of the tumuli raised by them over their dead.

The Shans say that the present town of Lashio, in the Northern Shan States, was once called "La-shiao" (the swiped-out La), and was so-called because the Las were swiped out there by the invading Shans. This is only one of many such legends invented to explain names whose real history is not known. In the same way, they say that Hsipaw was once called Hsi-kaw (four persons), and then tell a pretty tale about the four persons. Names so explained are usually pre-Shan names of which nothing is known, and anything may be imagined (by changing the name itself). It goes without saying that no dependence can be placed on such myths.

to quote them in full, but one or two may be given in tabloid form :

“Long ago, a me-naga (female naga) laid an egg on a mountain in Hainan. The child born from it grew into a beautiful woman, wandering solitary in the forests. A man belonging to one of the tribes of Cochin-China, going over there in search of sandal-wood, met her. The aboriginal tribes of the island are descended from their union.”

“A supernatural being from the Himalaya mountains was once wandering in the forests of Martaban, and met a naga-ma (the same as me-naga). As a result of their union, she laid an egg from which a daughter of exquisite beauty was hatched. She was brought up by a hermit. At the age of sixteen she was married to the king of Thatôn. Their two sons founded the old Talain city of Pegu.”

According to the Palaung tale, a sun-prince came down to the Mao valley, and there met and fell in love with a me-naga. She laid three eggs. Soon thereafter the sun-prince left her and went home. Finding herself abandoned, the me-naga, in a pet, cast her eggs away and drove down to naga-land. Two of the eggs were broken, and percolating through the earth originated the rubies of the Ruby Mines district and the jade of the Jade Mines district, one having fallen in each place, but the third fell into the river and was recovered by an old gardener. From this egg a little prince was born.\* The me-naga, soon after she reached her native land, was consoled and laid another egg. It hatched out a princess. When she was of marriageable age, her mother sent her to the Mao valley to find out what had become of her eggs. Little prince and little princess met, loved, and wed. From them the Palaungs, or at least the ruling class, descended. This may have been originally a “Mon-Anam myth.”

The Shan tale says, in brief, that a farmer's son was watching cattle by a pond near the Mao River, and seeing a

\* According to a Burman myth, *Pyu-saw-ti*, that king of Pagan (168—243 A.D.) with a Shan-Chinese title, was born from one of three eggs in a similar way. The myth may have originated among the Mons of China.

me-naga fell in love with her. He was readily enticed to follow her to the naga-country, without even saying good-bye to his parents. In due time the me-naga laid an egg, which he brought back to the Mao valley. From it a little son was born. When the little prince became of marriageable age, seventeen, there was a Shan king in Möng-se-long (Nanchao) who had a daughter. She was so beautiful that every prince wanted her. The king was resourceful, and built for her a palace on an island in the lake near by. He then commanded that any swain that could go and get her, without bridge or boat and without wetting his feet, should have her. The young Mao prince, Tüng-hkam (Golden-dry-leaves) by name, had been on a visit to his mother in naga-land and she had given him a magic wand, with instructions to strike the ground three times with it, and she would come to his aid, if anything was wanted. The prince, taking the wand with him, went to Möng-se-long, walked up to the lake, struck the ground as instructed, and his naga-mother rose to the surface of the water. She stretched herself from shore to island, and her son walked over on her back, dry shod. He got the princess, who was as willing as Barkis, and returned to the palace of the king. There was a marriage feast. The king sent back with the prince and his newly-found bride a large retinue and had a palace built for them in the valley of the Mao.

The striking similarity between all these (and various other) naga-myths is manifest. That they all came from a common source, old naga-worship, or what goes by that name, there can be no doubt. They are, withal, fables to give a beginning to historical events whose real beginning is not known. They are myths, and that is all they are.

Captain Forbes declares that the naga (or me-naga) in all the Mon-Anam myths stands for the aboriginal inhabitants, and that the man (or woman) in each case stands for the foreign immigrant. This may be so in the other instances given, but can scarcely be so in the Shan instance, for the farmer and his good wife were natives of the Mao valley, and if there was an intruder in the case at all, it was the

me-naga. These tales are pure myths to fill a blank space, mere starting points in pre-historic time, to serve as introductions to real events. The account of a king, or of the founding of a city, is to be written. Nothing is known. Never mind. Slip in a supernatural or natural being, a naga or me-naga, and a hermit with no pedigree at all, and the thing is done. Whatever significance these tales may have on the religious side, politically but little can be made of them. The Shan naga-myth seems to point to some traditional connection of the early Shans of the Mao valley with the kingdom of Nan-chao. It seems to say that the first Shan king, or some early king, married into the Nan-chao family. Taking into consideration the early westward extension of the Nan-chao kingdom, we must allow that such a connection was possible. Let us put it in this way: Shans from Yünnan settled, at some unknown time, in the Mao valley. The valley was wide and fertile, and those Shans multiplied. They in time appointed a ruler of their own. The king of Nan-chao, or of the western province of Mōng-myen (Têng-yüeh), wanted to keep a strong hand on this outlying district. What could be more natural than that he should call the ruler to his court and bestow upon him some disagreeable daughter of an ugly concubine? Something of this kind may have happened, but even if it did, no date is given and the tale throws little light on the early history of the Mao Shans.

The next legend of the Shan chronicle, to be considered, is peculiar but explicable. This legendary king of Mao, of half Shan and half naga parentage, had a son called Hkun-long (sometimes spelled Hkun-lu), and this Hkun-long had a son, Hkun-lai. Another account says they were brothers and sons of that former king, Hkun-tüng-hkam by name (Lord Dry-leaves the Golden). One account says that they succeeded each other as king in the Mao valley; another, that one of them remained there, and the other went off up the Chindwin River and founded a new kingdom of his own. An Assam-Shan chronicle, we are told, says that they were both born up that way, and that one of them stayed at home like a good boy, while the other went eastward and founded



this same new kingdom. They crop up again in the tale of Kan(raj)gyi and Kan(raj)nge which the Burmese borrowed from the Shans.

Fortunately, one of the Ahom (Shan) manuscripts from Assam explains the riddle for us. It tells the original Hkun-long Hkun-lai story and enough more to make plain how the tale was borrowed, for the same purpose, in different places. The original story is this :

There was an old Shan kingdom down on the Cambodia River, extending westward to the border of Chieng-mai.\* The border then may not have been just where it is now. At an unknown time the king of that kingdom died without issue, and the kingdom fell into disorder. The king of the "Northern Kingdom," as it is called in the story, and by which Nan-chao is manifestly meant, called his counsellors together to consider what ought to be done to set matters right. They decided that a prince or two should be sent down there by the king to take over charge in his name. No action, however, was to be taken until the Shan king of Mōng-t'ien (Yünnan-sen) had been consulted and his sanction secured. A messenger was sent on horseback post haste. He met with many adventures by the way, but arriving in due time, readily obtained the sanction sought. The letter which he bore from the northern king was couched in polite language, as delicate as modern diplomacy. He called the southern king his son, confessed that the southern kingdom was as powerful and glorious as his own, and made clear his own anxiety not to offend. The king of T'ien's reply was equally polite and diplomatic.

The successful envoy returned and, reporting to the palace, this Hkun-long and Hkun-lai, nephews of the king, were appointed to rule conjointly over the Shan state on the Cambodia. Before being carried away in palanquins, the appointees were charged by the northern king not to

\* The Shan state on the Cambodia was called Mōng-hi Mōng-ham (or Mōng-ri Mōng-ram), probably Keng-sen, the Pa-peh Ta-tien of the Chinese.

neglect their annual sacrifices to the myriads of spirits (probably ancestral), to worship a peculiar sword which was ever to hang in their palace, and to send up their tribute. They took also a palace drum, whose reverberations could call the people together, daunt enemies, or bring rain in time of drought, and a *sum-leo* (or *sum-deo*), "letters-patent,"\* from the *Nan-chao* king. The king himself had one which he received from the Chinese Emperor. As the name is said to be from the Chinese, "*sum-lok*," it is quite possible that both really issued from the same source. The new rulers were received with joy and with fitting hospitality. Soon thereafter they fell out between themselves. *Hkun-lai*, the younger brother, seems to have gotten the best of it, and retained the southern end of the state or sub-kingdom. *Hkun-long* went northward and took over charge of a region apparently on either side of the *Cambodia River*, eastward from the *Wild Wa* country. Before very long, however, the possession of the whole state reverted to the descendants of *Hkun-long*. The *Lü* and the *Lao* (both *Shan*) are mentioned as coming within the dominion of these kings. As they were commanded, when *Hkun-long* and *Hkun-lai* were sent down, to pay an annual tribute to the northern king, and as he himself appears to have visited the kingdom on the *Cambodia*, we may take it for granted that this *Shan* state was at that time subject to *Nan-chao*. On the other hand, the same writing expressly declares that the kingdom of *T'ien* extended westward to the *Salween*, and that the king's sanction was asked and received before these rulers were appointed. The king of *Nan-chao*, therefore, whom the king of *T'ien* called "Our Father," may have been regarded as a protector or *mesne-lord* over all the southern *Shans*, holding a relation to them similar to that of the emperor to himself. However this may have been, the southward states were doubtless practically independent in their local affairs. Otherwise the northern king would not have said, even in a polite

\* Such a seal or letters-patent has been found recently in possession of the *Shans* of *Assam*, with the date 1408 A.D. See *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, April 1913.

diplomatic address, that the kingdom of T'ien was equal in power and glory to his own.

We may now return to the valley of the Mao. Here, in the Shan records, we find that the sons, or a son and a grandson, of the legendary king, Hkun-tüng-hkam, had the same names as the northern king's appointees. Moreover, the same is said to have occurred among the Shans of Assam. The Burmans also claim them as the sons of "Abhi-raja," the alleged founder of Ta Kawng. How shall we account for this? The answer is not far to seek. At that time the Shan kings of Nan-chao, and "all the Royal Family," may have been educated in Chinese. Even Shan royalty of that time could keep records in Chinese. I take it that they did keep them, and that the Hkun-long Hkun-lai story is historical. It is also certain that the bulk of the Shans, probably everybody outside of royalty, were absolutely illiterate. Both the Mao Shans and the Assam Shans got the pretty tale from the Cambodia River region; when and how they got it will soon appear. Until they got it, and with it letters of their own, no records were kept in these parts, so far as we can now ascertain.\* Up to that time, all that we have is fable. So far as these Shans are concerned, there is nothing to go and come on but fancy, inference, and conjecture. The Hsipaw chronicle goes the farthest back and bears on its face a look of reality, for the names and dates of her kings are given, without a break, from before the beginning of the Christian era. Its dates condemn it. An average of thirty years each for forty kings ruling in succession is a large order. They never did it. That piece of antique furniture was made in a modern workshop, but is a fair imitation. It must go, at least that part of it that deals with ancient kings, on to the scrap heap, along with the Me-naga and Little-Lord-Dry-Leaves of the valley of the Mao. I can find no clear, definite, dependable history, not a line, up to the middle of the tenth century.

\* It is quite possible that the Shans had letters at a much earlier date; but, if they had, they were destroyed in devastating wars. I refer here to such records as we know and to Shan history as we find it.

## II.—THE HISTORICAL PERIOD, FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE TENTH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT TIME.

BETWEEN the fictitious or borrowed characters of Mao legendary history and the actual coming to the Mao valley of the Cambodia River Shans, the local (and modern) records slip in an interregnum called the Rule of the Four Elders. They also state that these Elders, weary of ruling, induced the representatives of the people to send to the Shan king down on the Cambodia to ask him for a few of his sons for their chiefs. The king could easily spare a few, for he had, they say, one hundred of them—"as many as could sit in rows on four pine logs." One record affirms that thirteen of these princes were sent; another account says that each of the princes had "eighty thousand rice-pots, with three men to a pot." Let us see; that would be—but it is too much trouble to foot it up. Anyway, it would make a clean and tidy little kindergarten of three million smiles and blushes, with many left in the backyard crying because they could not be admitted from lack of accommodation. (Modesty is a distinguishing trait, as we shall see, of the Shan historians.)

According to an Ahom writing, the southern Shans came up of their own accord. The account reads like a report of a pleasure excursion on a bank holiday. There was much marching, and but little, if any, fighting, for no mention is made of any clash of arms. The Shan account expressly declares that they came as invited guests, and were treated in the most hospitable way. But there must have been some reason, other than the reason given, for what Imousun would have called "an unusual line of policy." There had been frequent wars between Nan-chao and China for a century. Nan-chao was exhausted. It is therefore possible that the Shan king on the Cambodia saw and seized his opportunity to annex the Mao Shans, and much more, to his own kingdom. He sent up (according to one record) five of his own sons and eight others of "different parents." If they had 80,000 pots, and three men to a pot, they could

walk throughout the length and breadth of the land and carry all before them.\*

From all that I can gather from the names given of places on the line of march, it seems that the princes, with their large following, ascended the Cambodia to some point eastward of the Mao valley. A Hsenwi chronicle states that they came on to that valley. An Ahom writing says that they continued their march westward as far as Hsipaw and, turning southward, passed through several of the southern Shan states before returning to the Mao. According to the Hsenwi chronicle, just mentioned, the princes stopped there and took a year of leisure in which to chew kun and talk matters over. Then the oldest son, Hkun Tai, parcelled out the country to nine of the total of thirteen princes—except Hsenwi which he kept for himself, but gave over the government the next year to his oldest son. Four of the princes are not mentioned as receiving any of the spoil; perhaps they preferred to rest and chew kun. The others set forth to take possession of the parts assigned them, severally, of the Shan states and tributary territory.†

I forgot it. I will say it now. An Ahom manuscript says that these princes brought writings with them. They did; I am quite sure of it. There was a chronicle, such as it

\* I have done a little figuring here. According to the account, from the time Hkun-long and Hkun-lai went down to that sub-state on the Cambodia and the invasion of these Shan states by the Shans from down there, there were nine reigns (covering a period of some 180 years). As 955 A.D. is given as the date of the invasion, the "nephews" must have left Nan-chao about 775 A.D. But unfortunately the list of successions begins with "Hkun Tai," which may mean either Shan Ruler or Shan Rulers (number unknown). The same thing happens when they reach Hsenwi to chew kun; again the oldest son's name is Hkun Tai, Shan Ruler or Shan Rulers (number unknown). It is these little foxes that spoil the vines. One can never be certain which end the tails are on. I am inclined to think that the date given for the invasion is approximately correct; but the descent to the Cambodia regions may have been much earlier; still the account has the hall-marks of being historical.

† That the Shans occupied the basin of the Upper Irrawaddy before the dawn of the Christian era is, I think, reasonably certain; but I am not at all certain that the "Hpais" did not occupy much of the territory now known as the Shan States, west of the Salween, until this invasion. However, the records themselves give Shan names and assume that it was altogether a Shan population. The Chieng-mai Shans appear to have conquered the Was of Kengtung about 670 years ago, and introduced Buddhism there at that time.

was, and some fairy tales. The latter are about as reliable, and more readable. Don't fuss; you shall have one or two of them a little further on. Now you must settle down to a few pages of solid history. The meat and potatoes always come before the pudding in well regulated families.

In the division of the spoil, we want to know what each of those princes got. One got the south-west corner of the Shan states, with Thatôn, Rangoon, and Maulmein thrown in, perhaps to supply, in revenue, the pin money for his harem. This is only a casual way of saying that the old Talain kingdom was his appanage. Another got Mōng Ham, Mōng Yawng and Mōng Hkatara, *i.e.*, a large slice of the Shan kingdom on the Cambodia, with northern Siam dropped into the basket for good measure. The others got, between them, the Shan states, except the corner, a wide strip in western Yünnan, and the north-eastern part of modern Burma, including much of the basin of the Chindwin. According to the account followed by Ney Elias, they took in Ava (Pagan), *i.e.*, the Burman kingdom in the basin of the Irrawaddy as well.\* This, perhaps, so she would not feel slighted after so much attention had been paid to Rangoon and Maulmein. If a Hsenwi chronicle can be trusted, the son, Hkun Tai, who remained in the Hsenwi valley, built there a palace which was to serve as a federal court for the transaction of interstate business. His share of the Shan dominions extended southward ten days' journey, and westward far enough to take in the present state of Hsipaw.

If we could be sure that we were being treated here to facts, rather than to fiction, it would be worth while to go

\* That the Shans, at this time, were numerous, not only in the Shwe-li or Mao valley, but in the basin of the Upper Irrawaddy, and possibly in the valley of the Chindwin, is by no means improbable. Putting the many fancies and the few facts together, I am inclined to think that they were; but there is no positive and clear evidence of it. The relation between the Shans and the Burmans was probably one of alliance. According to Mr. Parker, Nan-chao "used to exercise suzerainty over Burma on account of its contiguity and by reason of the military strength of Nan-chao." This applies to the eighth century and earlier. An alliance with Burma in the middle of the tenth century is therefore a moderate assumption, and a limited degree of domination is not unlikely. That "the Shan dominion (a century later) was broken by the conquests of Anawrata," as Phayre asserts, is, I think, an unsupported assumption.



HSENWI SHAN AND WIFE. SHOWING TURBANS AND HATS.

*Facing page 66.*





into this matter in detail and give, as nearly as possible, the exact boundaries in each case; but there is so much manifest exaggeration that the feeling of being fooled is irresistible. The Shan writer would have stretched his long arm over the Himalayas and flicked the Czar of Russia from his throne and annexed his empire, if he had thought of it or known that they were there.

That Shan princes came from the Cambodia River region at or about this time; that the country was occupied, in part at least, by Shans and was extensive; and that the Mao kingdom became, for a considerable length of time, tributary to the kingdom on the Cambodia, seem certain. That is about as far as we can safely go.\*

Whether the Shan capital of this time, the middle of the tenth century, was in the Hsenwi or the Mao valley it is not now possible to determine with certainty. It is practically certain that it was in the Mao valley at an earlier period, and absolutely certain that it was there a little later, and as that valley was settled by Shans, in all probability, before the Hsenwi valley was, the capital of the Mao kingdom may have been there all the time—until the kingdom was broken in two by the Chinese and broken up by the Burmans. The weight of evidence, on the whole, seems to be in favour of the Mao. That is to say, if the Shans of these parts had any central capital at all. It is more likely that the earlier Shan settlements, in so far as the country may have been settled by the Shans, were practically independent of one another. The little Shan prince down in the south-west

\* "Kambawsa Sengni Kawsampi," as we have seen, was the big thundering classical name (and still is) of Hsenwi. Mr. Taw Sein Ko says that "Kambawsa" is Cambodia, and that "Sengni" is Hsenwi, and "Kawsampi" (often used alone as the classical name of the Shan states) was a place in northern India. That Hsenwi should claim both India and the whole Indo-Chinese peninsula as tributary to herself, like a lover courting two girls at the same time and with one arm around each of them, is not surprising. Still that Cambodia should lead off in this clap of thunder is at least curious. Hsenwi was formerly tributary to the Shan kingdom on the Cambodia River. Did the latter dominate Cambodia in the tenth century? or was it subject to Cambodia? or was the name idly borrowed for its sound that the glories of Hsenwi might go crashing round the globe? Dr. Dodd states that Cambodian rule extended at one time as far north as Keng-sen, the capital of that Shan kingdom,

corner of these Shan states, with the Talain kingdom for his appanage, for instance, might have wriggled on, it would seem, by himself without that federal court in the Hsenwi valley. At a later day, the Mao Shans did overrun, and hold for a time in subjugation, much of the vast territory mentioned here. The north-eastern parts of the country marked "Laos" on our maps came at one time within the Shan kingdom on the Cambodia. An Ahom writing says so, and until we know more of the history of that section, it would be in vain to deny it. If such was the case, that part of northern Siam may have fallen to one of these princes, whichever of those "four pine logs" he may have sat on. That would have left him tributary to the kingdom on the Cambodia; and probably all of the Shan states of eastern Burma were at that time. The records do not say so, and naturally the Shans here would be loath to confess it, but events speak louder than words, and from the events nothing less can be inferred.

Much more thorough research than I have been able to make should be made into the history of western Yünnan, and northern Siam for this period, then we may be able to check the claims of the Shan chronicles, or be compelled to throw them out altogether.

It is well to say again, in passing, that Hsenwi, a state that is loath to give the kings of Mao credit for anything, asserts that she was the Shan belle of those days. Before the days of Hsö-hkan-hpa (soon to be mentioned), we find her sewing the western part of Yünnan, the Burman and the Talain kingdoms, and the Lao states on her jacket for silver buttons, and even sticking Bangkok, as a feather, in her hat a few centuries before that bird was hatched. This need not trouble us, for autobiographical and graveyard epitaphs are not always to be taken seriously. That is merely the way the Shans had in writing history.

We come now to events which left plainer tracks on the sands of time. About the beginning of the thirteenth century there arose the most powerful of all the western Shan kings. He was not a Hsenwi but a Mao king, Hsö-hkan-hpa by name. When he came to the throne the

leading northern Shan principalities seem to have been practically independent and of nearly equal power. These principalities were Mao, Mit, Hsenwi, and Ong-pawng (Hsipaw). With supreme confidence in himself, Hsö-hkan-hpa commanded the other principalities to submit and acknowledge his suzerainty. He apparently had foreseen their refusal and had prepared for it. With a large army he attacked and conquered them, and their appanages, in turn. Möngkawng (Mogaung), and probably some of the Shan states across the frontier of modern Yünnan, were already subject to Mao. Emboldened by success, he now set out on extensive wars of conquest. He sent Hsam-long, the governor of Möngkawng, westward to invade Arakan and Manipur; thence northward, where he entered and received the submission of Assam. Two of Hsö-hkan-hpa's ministers, who were in charge of divisions of the army, on their return, charged Hsam-long with rebellious designs. Possibly he aimed to set up imperial house-keeping in his own right. However this may have been, he was seized and brought to the Mao River, where he was put to death. His invasion of Assam appears to have had no lasting results favourable to the Mao king, for his work, soon thereafter, had to be done over again.

Hsö-hkan-hpa led the southern army in person. Where he went and what he accomplished may be inferred from the territory which is said to have come under his thumb. Marching eastward, he is said to have met and vanquished a Chinese army sent to resist him. This was before the inroads under Prince Kublai and shows that the Chinese still had a finger in that pie. The territory in that direction which is said to have been subjugated by him included a strip from Tali on the north to Keng-sen and Ving-chang far down the Cambodia. On the south, he took in much or all of northern Siam and Ayuthia, the old capital of Siam from 1350. (There seems to be an anachronism here, unless the earlier Ayuthia of the Mons is intended—but never mind.) This was not all done, if done at all, in a single dry season, for he is said to have spent a whole year in the Hsip-hsawng Pan-na region alone. He had undertaken a man's job and it may have taken him several years to finish

it. South-westward Tavoy is now added (Thatôn, Rangoon, and Maulmein were claimed before).<sup>\*</sup> That his army may have overrun and looted much of this vast area is possible. That the more distant places were really subjugated is utterly absurd. This applies to Ayuthia and to the Talain kingdom. Less difficulty is found in believing the statements in regard to western Yünnan. The Nan-chao kingdom was exhausted with long wars with China. The Shan kingdom on the Cambodia had become manifestly independent, splitting the Nan-chao kingdom in two. The Mao kingdom was probably subject to the latter until this time, or at least nominally so. A strong army well led might have fallen unaware on unprotected towns and have carried everything before it, like a jungle fire. A similar supposition would apply to northern Siam. This whole territory was largely Shan. A warrior of Hsö-hkan-hpa's energy and ambition may have subjugated this Shan territory and held it under tribute during his lifetime. Pagan is here again found in the list of captured kingdoms. I am informed that Burmese history is silent on this point, which is presumptive evidence that it is true.

When the warrior-king, Hsö-hkan-hpa, returned to the valley of the Mao, he found that a queen and some of his ministers had set up royal house-keeping in a humble way. With a victorious army at his back, it was an easy matter to sweep the dirt from the royal kitchen. The queen had fled, but was caught and killed near Hsenwi. Hsö-hkan-hpa now found it desirable to stay at home and attend to his own house-keeping. He therefore sent his nephew (the term may be political rather than consanguineous), Hsö-ka-hpa by name, with a strong army, to the northward to finish the job Hsam-long had done so badly. Hsö-ka-hpa led his army into the Möng-ti Möng-yang region, on what is now the Chinese side, and from there he marched westward to Möng-kawng. From Möng-kawng he marched northward to the lower Kham-ti neighbourhood. Ai-htawn,

<sup>\*</sup> The conquest of Martaban and Pegu by "Wareru," the Chieng-mai adventurer, may be anticipated in the Shan record. It is not unlikely that he was assisted by northern Shans, and that the latter claimed the honour, while the former took the spoils of war.

the southern of the two Kham-ti clans, is mentioned as having given in its submission. There was constant fighting with hill tribes, so we may assume that he made clean work of the watersheds of the Chindwin. At least in one instance he is said to have sewn up the eyelids of his captives and let them go. The genius of Bulgar and Turk may have surpassed that of the Shans in the inventions of cruelty. The world is progressing—and so was Hsö-ka-hpa's army towards Assam. It is difficult from the Ahom writings to get at the exact places and dates, but it is safe to say that it took him fully two years to subdue the hill tribes of Upper Burma, and fully four more to conquer Assam. The record of his invasion is one of incessant war. He won out at last, and settled down in the Brahmaputra valley to enjoy the mustard leaves and cucumbers of a garden which, according to the record, it took a large army and at least four years to weed. This does not read much like the tale of Hsam-long's Sunday-school picnic-like excursion, with its meeting with a cowherd and the immediate submission of the whole country, waiting to fall into his arms.

After a reign of forty-five years, Hsö-hkan-hpa, according to the chronicle, died at Ving-ta-pok, which was the name of the older part of the present town of Hsipaw. Even the Hsenwi chronicle breaks through its shell of self-adulation and sums up its estimate of this Shan king's character in these words: "He was a mighty king." Whatever may have been true of earlier times, there was certainly a consolidated Mao kingdom during his reign, a kingdom vastly exceeding either the Burman kingdom of Pagan or the Talain kingdom of Pegu, of that day, in area and power.\*

The great Hsö-hkan-hpa was followed on the throne of Mao by weaklings, and gave the several princes

\* It is interesting to note that the amount of annual tribute, in silver, gold, elephants, and ponies, which Hsö-hkan-hpa is said to have demanded, and received during his lifetime, from each of two of his appanages (Assam and the Lao states) figures out about fifty thousand pounds sterling. That he ever received it all is highly improbable, but he may have received enough to keep his harem in pin-money.

opportunity to assert considerable independence. We find Möng-kawng in the north, and Hsenwi in the south, making large pretensions in their own name and right. Even Ong-pawng (Hsipaw) lifts her head and claims to be first among equals. Turning now to Mr. Hallett's sketch of the Shans, we find him saying that between 1283 and 1292 the Mao shattered the Burman empire, and, perhaps with the aid of the Mongol-Chinese, pursued the Burman king farther south than Prome, and that they, the Mao Shans, annexed Chieng-mai about 1293. Mr. Hallett appears to have obtained his information, in regard to the annexation, from Lao and Siamese sources. This invasion is sometimes credited wholly to the Mongol-Chinese, in 1284, during the reign of Kublai Khan. This was about thirty years after the fall of Tali, but long before any serious attack was made by the Chinese on the Mao kingdom, excepting the acknowledgment by the Shans of a Chinese suzerainty which was scarcely more than nominal.

Mr. Cocks says, in this connection (page 30), that it is almost certain that the Mongol army did not descend the Irrawaddy River below Tagaung, and that if Pagan was indeed sacked, the destruction must have been the work of Shan auxiliaries or of Burman troops themselves (1283). According to Shan accounts, the Wong-ti (a title commonly applied by the Shans to the governor of any Chinese province, or to the emperor and here probably meaning the governor of Yünnan) sent an army and asked for support from the Shan chief of Sung-ko (Singu). He in turn was supported by Tai Pong, the chief of Mao. All of the Shans west of the Salween are represented as having been under these two leading chiefs at this particular time. The Shan statement is: "The Chinese army, with the Shan forces, invaded Pagan"; this is quite consistent with the statement by Mr. Cocks. In 1285, "Comforters of Pangya" were established at Pagan; these were Shan chiefs appointed to maintain peace and uphold Chinese prestige. According to Mr. Parker, Luh-ch'wan and Kan-ngai (in western Yünnan) and Mu-pang (Hsenwi) were "protected Sawbwashes," *i.e.*,

acknowledged Chinese suzerainty, 1260 A.D. This was twenty-five years before the comforters of Pangya.\*

It is almost certain that, if Chieng-mai was annexed at this time, the annexation was done by the Mongol-Chinese, perhaps with the aid of the same Shan auxiliaries, for the northern Shans were never so happy as when conquering and plundering their own kinsmen. According to a Hsenwi chronicle, a prince from that principality settled at Ta-poke (Hsipaw) in 1288 and built a large town there. Then follows the refrain: "He assumed authority over all the Shan states, including Thatôn, Rangoon, Maulmein, Bangkok, Hpa-hsa Tawng, the Hsip-hsawng Pan-na, and Mōng-pai." It may be that Mr. Hallett refers to Hsö-hkan-hpa's invasion which took place, according to Ney Elias, about a cycle of sixty years before. A Hsenwi chronicle gives the date of Hsö-hkan-hpa's invasion as 1260. It is evident that the dates are mixed. A reasonable conclusion is that the first "annexation" was by Mao Shans, and the second by the Mongols, possibly with the assistance of the northern Shan warriors. There is another detail here worthy of notice: the Mongol-Chinese evidently dealt with Mao, Hsenwi, Mōng-kawng (Mogaung), and Panya (Shan) Houses independently. Thus they hastened the dissolution of the Mao kingdom, even if it had not really taken place some time before. Shan interference in the affairs of the Talain kingdom (which they indefinitely define as "Thatôn and Maulmein"), at this time under Burman domination, cannot be debited to the northern Shans. Mr. Cocks sums up the situation briefly but clearly: "A merchant of Siam, of Shan descent, Magadu by name, had become possessed of a white elephant, with which he purchased the favours of the king of Siam and so rose to a position of great wealth and power. During the absence of the king, he eloped with the latter's daughter, and settled in his native city of Dunwun on the Belin River. Here he became

\* Mr. Taw Sein Ko adds at this point this informing note: "Pang-ya or Pin-ya is close to Ava. After the subversion of Pagan by the Mongols in 1284 A.D., the seat of government was transferred to Pinle, Minzaing, Metkaya (in the Kyaukse district) and thence to Pin-ya. The 'Comforters' resided at Pin-ya and not at Pagan."

acquainted with the Burmese governor of Martaban, Alimma, whom he treacherously killed. He then proclaimed himself king of Martaban with the name of Wareru, 1282 A.D. A Burmese force having been sent against Tarabya, the new king of Pegu, he appealed for help to Wareru. The combined forces of the two kings attacked the Burmese troops in their stockade at Dalla on the Rangoon River and routed them, compelling them to retire to Upper Burma. The allied armies then encamped to the south of the city of Pegu or Hanthawadi. Here Wareru picked a quarrel with Tarabya, and a battle was fought in which Tarabya was beaten and fled. He was captured, however, not long afterwards and brought to Wareru, who kept him prisoner and declared himself king of Pegu (1287). He did not fix his capital at Hanthawadi, but returned to Martaban, where Tarabya was put to death on a charge of conspiracy to kill the king, and Wareru ruled without a rival over Pegu till the year 1306 A.D."

While these things were going on in the south, the Shans gained a similar ascendancy in the basin of the Irrawaddy. Cocks again: "During the decline of the Burman power at Pagan the Shans had acquired considerable influence in the country, and on the dissolution of the Pagan kingdom they were ready to seize the chief positions of power. About the year 1250 a Shan named Thingkabo, having quarrelled with his elder brother about a matter of inheritance, fled to Burma and settled in Myinsaing to the south of Ava, where there was already a Shan colony. He had three sons, Athengkhar, Razathingyan and Thihathu, and one daughter who was married to another Thihathu, son of Tarokpyemin. The three sons obtained great wealth and authority in Pagan, and were all appointed governors of districts. When the Pagan monarchy was overthrown by the Chinese, each of these Shan governors became independent and began to extend his power."

The existence of a Shan settlement south of Ava, and the three brothers as governors of districts, give credence to the Shan claim of large influence in the basin of the Irrawaddy



from a somewhat earlier time. It is not improbable that Shans were in a majority from Sagaing northward and eastward. Even now more than half of the people from Katha to Myitkyina are Shan in blood and, though largely Burmanized, still speak Shan in their homes. The great influence of the Shans is inferable from the fact that the rulers in the Talain and the Burman kingdoms, from the latter part of the thirteenth century, were, with few exceptions, either pure Shan or Shan-Talain and Shan-Burman half-breeds for above two centuries; and there was a fair sprinkling of them in the province or sub-kingdom of Taungu.

As to Chinese strategy at about this time, we learn from Mr. Parker that they captured Möng-kawng, and presumably Möng-yang in 1334; appointed more comforters of Pangya in 1338, whom they recalled four years later; and "granted Ming dynasty seals to Mu-pang (Hsenwi) in the latter part of the fourteenth century."

In 1412,<sup>s</sup> according to Phayre and Cocks, from four to six years later according to Shan chronicles, the Shans of Hsenwi, which claims to have ruled over about one-half of the Shan territory west of the Salween at that time, suffered their first crushing defeat at the hands of the Burmans, during the reign of Min-re-kyaw-swa. The Shan account does not explain the situation. A clear statement is given by Cocks (p. 51):

"During the period which followed the death of Tarokpyemin, the Chinese claimed supremacy over Burma as well as the Shan states on their frontier. For some years, in the reign of Usana (1322-42), Chinese officers were actually stationed at Sagaing and Panya, and some control was exercised over the affairs of Burmans and Shans until the time of Alaungpaya. Accordingly when a quarrel arose between Burma and the Shan state of Theinni (Hsenwi), the Chinese sent an army to restore peace and punish the Burmans for the death of the chief of Theinni. The Chinese account states that twenty cities of Burma were captured and prisoners were sent to Peking. The young prince Min-re-kyaw-swa met and overthrew this army and completed the conquest of Theinni in 1412."

Phayre says : " The origin of the quarrel is not stated, but Min-re-kyaw-swa was sent against the chief of that state (Hsenwi), who was defeated and slain. His sons shut themselves up in their fortified city, and called in the Chinese to help them. The prince attacked the Chinese army while on the march and defeated it. He then returned and reinvaded the city, which surrendered." Whatever the result was, the Chinese appointed Mengtara (of Möng-yang) " Comforter " in 1426. He was one of the Shan kings of Burma. All the " Comforters " were Shans, which was little comfort to the Burmans.

In 1459, following a Shan account, the Shans of Hsenwi made war on Keng-hung (the Hsip-hsawng Pan-na) which they claim was then a dependency, and on their kinsmen of northern Siam at the command of the Burman king. This would be like France making war on Normandy at the dictation of Germany. A lower degree of subserviency it is hard to imagine, if it took place at all. Historical writers on Burman affairs make no mention of it ; but such an act is characteristic of the Shans and it may have been their own way of taking a holiday. Sixty-seven years later things change again in favour of the Shans. Hsö-hom-hpa (the Tho-han-bwa of the Burmans), son of the chief of Möng-yang (Mohnyin), captured Ava and Prome. Upper Burma remained under Shan domination till the ascendancy of Bayin Naung, the conquering king of Pegu. Of this period the Shan accounts give but little of value not already made familiar in the history of Burma.

The Shan records agree with the Burman that their loss of Ava was due to mutual jealousies and lack of co-operation. Hsö-hom-hpa (Tho-han-bwa) incurred the hatred of the Burmans by his cruelties. He may not, however, have been so impious as the Burmans make him out to have been. There may have been occasion for his hostility in dealing with the Buddhist monks, if Burman monks took part in insurrections and their monasteries were the favourite haunts of conspirators, as was sometimes the case at the time of British occupation. This could not justify his expulsion and massacre of so many of that religious

fraternity, but it does suggest what may have been the occasion of his enmity. The Shans seem to have supported Hsö-hom-hpa's immediate successor, but when his son, a prince from the comparatively unimportant state of Möngpai, with the title of Möngpai-Narabadi (Mobyemin), ascended the throne of Ava, the northern Shans refused tribute or to help him in any way. The end might have been foreseen. Surrounded by Burmans already aggrieved and bursting with race-pride, and who had never taken kindly to the rule of the Shan invaders, he soon found his position untenable. He fled to Bayin Naung who, according to Shan accounts, promised to re-establish him upon his throne. Bayin Naung marched northward, conquered Ava (1555), and sat on the throne himself for a short time. Putting his brother on the throne of Ava, he returned to his capital in Pegu before the rainy season. Two years later he subjugated the Shan states on the upper Irrawaddy, including the present small state of Möng-mao, and several other neighbouring principalities now on the Chinese side. The Shan states from Hsipaw to Möngnai (and to the westward) seem to have given in their allegiance to Bayin Naung at this time, for according to Burman accounts, he marched on Hsipaw and Möngnai the following year (1558), which had rebelled and obtained assistance from Chieng-mai. Chieng-mai also was attacked and conquered.

"During these expeditions the state of Theinni (Hsenwi), which was under Chinese protection, was not attacked, but followed the example of other states and sent presents to the king. The Chinese history admits that Mohnyin (including Mogaung), Manmu (Bhamo), and other Shan states to the north-east were from this time onwards subject to Burma, though no annual tribute seems to have been exacted."—(Cocks, p. 78). This is curious. A Theinni (Hsenwi) chronicle states that when Bayin Naung's brother (Thado Minsaw) became king of Ava (1555) he appointed his nephew, "Sao-long-hkam-hken-hpa," as chief of all the Shan states. He may have been only a sort of major-domo merely to keep an eye on the Shan household and report if he should see too much courting going on in the kitchen.

If he really had any official power at all, and Hsenwi at the same time was under Chinese protection, it is evident that Hsenwi was fooling with two sweethearts. Perhaps with the intention of marrying the one that first sued him for breach of promise. It was Ava. Phayre states that during the last three or four years of his reign, Nyaung Yan Min of Ava was occupied in subduing the Shan states; including the two strongest, Mohnyin and Mogaung (these were really one state and the names mark the alternating site of the capital). This king died in 1605, which is only one year before the date assigned by the Shan record for the fall of Hsenwi: "Thus (in 1606) Hsenwi became a dependency of Möng-man Möng-men (Ava)." This probably expresses the historical fact, whether the Chinese immediately accepted it or not. During the preceding half-century this state seems to have paid tribute both to China and to Burma. Keng-hung on the Cambodia River did this till a much later time, and Möng-lem, a small state beyond the Salween, was still at it at the time of British occupation of these Shan states.

It is difficult to get at the exact extent of Mongol-Chinese suzerainty and fiddling in the Shan states and Burma. There is little reason for supposing that the Chinese ever regarded this outlying region as other than a sort of Mongolian frontier or Tibetan hinterland, as buffer states "to prevent injury from violent contact," over which they exercised or aimed to exercise merely nominal control, even though they took some part and had to take some part in the affairs of both Shans and Burmans. Sometimes they came down with an army, like a stern father with a horse-whip administering healthful discipline on his truculent children. It may be granted that Pagan was sacked with the sanction and aid of the Chinese, and that then or a little later the Chinese took a hand in "comforting" the country and arranging for tribute. The latter seems never to have been very large, and is never even mentioned by the Shans. Here and there "presents" are spoken of, but they were of the Christmas and birthday order. After Kyawswa of Pagan was forced to enter a monastery (1298) the Chinese, claiming Pagan, as well as the Shan states, as a depend-

ency, sent an army to restore him to his throne, but the generals were easily persuaded to withdraw with the king's head and a bribe. For some years, during the reign of Usana (1322-42), it is said that Chinese officials were stationed at Sagaing and Panya, and probably in Pagan itself, and exercised some control over Burman and Shan affairs. These were Mr. Parker's "comforters." They appear to have been Shan chiefs charged with maintaining order and Chinese prestige. A little later (1412) the Burmans made an attack on Hsenwi and put the chief to death. A Chinese army was sent down to spank them for their impertinence, but got spanked and withdrew. Hsenwi must have fallen temporarily to the Burmans, but may have continued to pay tribute (such as it was) to China also. The Shan chief (Mintara) of Mohnyin (Möng-yang) conquered Ava (1426) and was recognized by the Chinese as "Governor of Central Burma." In the middle of the fifteenth century the Chinese still included Burma, Hsenwi, Luang Prabang, and "Taikkala south of Taungu" \* among vassal states. Chinese suzerainty, such as it was, seems to have come to an end early in the seventeenth century, when Hsenwi came finally under the Burmans, rather than at the ascendancy of Alaungpara as some have claimed. According to Mr. Parker, "Burma sent no tribute after 1628." Very likely this tribute was scarcely more than an exchange of presents, marking the continuation of peace and goodwill. The Siamese exchanged presents (sometimes called tribute) with the Chinese up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, and Siam (and the whole globe) may have been regarded by China, up to that time, as a Chinese hinterland.

The Burman king, Bayin Naung, we are told, left Buddhist monks in the Shan states to teach the people that

\* Dr. Forchhammer and Mr. Taw Sein Ko agree that this "Taikkala" is the modern "Ayetthima," and identify it as the "Takola" of Ptolemy, the "Takala" of the Chinese Annals, and the "Gola-mattikagaram" of the Kalyani inscription of Pegu (1476 A.D.).

See *Notes on the Early History and Geography of British Burma*, by Em. Forchhammer, Ph.D., p. 3; and *Burmese Sketches*, by Taw Sein Ko, K.I.H., I.S.O., p. 78.

Prof. E. H. Parker seems to think that it is "Korat," a Siamese province. See Parker's *Burma*, p. 60.

religious system. The Shans have a tradition that the "Five-hundred Pagodas" of Möng-köng in the Southern Shan States were built up round a central pillar erected by the Burman generals at that time. This is possible. But the Shans were Buddhists long before their submission to this Burman king. Manifestly these monks were left to introduce the Burman form of Buddhism, together with the Burman language and literature, to Burmanize the people in order to weld the two races together—a course which the Burmans adopted in the conquest of the Talains of Lower Burma.

The fortunes of the Shans, under Burman rule, depended very much upon the character of the king. Under good kings they were not heavily oppressed; under bad kings they groaned because of their taskmasters. Under the last Burman king, Thibaw, the Irresolute, anarchy prevailed. The Shans, fighting among themselves, destroyed the last slight traces of prosperity left by the Burmans. 1886, when the British assumed control of the Shan states, marks the beginning of a new era of peace, wealth and contentment.

"Now the whole country is under settled and righteous law administered through officials bound under the adamant limitations of British rule, the beneficent sway of which has established not only safety and peace but also even-handed justice in every village and hamlet, no matter how remote—the higher the official, the more careful he is to be clean of hand and righteous of intention in every judgment rendered. Laudable ambition has every governmental encouragement, ability and energy are incited to the highest prosperity, and everywhere the natural rewards of virtue, industry and thrift are assured to the patient well-doer in every honest craft and calling. So clearly manifest, so widely known, so indisputable is all this that no native Burman (or Shan) has ever risen to impugn the intentional equity of British rule or to call in question the actual peace and prosperity ever and everywhere enjoyed under its sway."\*

\* H. H. Tilbe, Ph.D., *The Standard*, Chicago, U.S.A., August 1913.

There may be in this quotation a slight exuberance of enthusiasm. The meek and modest British themselves might not wish to boast of such absolute perfection of social justice. On the whole, however, this meed of praise, certainly so far as the Shans are concerned, has been earned and well earned.

It is easy, and natural perhaps, to complain of the weather and of taxes. Shans and Burmans have done both; but they should remember that, even with a royalty on edible birds'-nests and a stumpage on bamboo sprouts, suggestive of thrift in the culinary department, the taxes have been reduced, as Mr. Dooley says, "to a level where the poorest are within their reach," that they are impartially levied, and collected with fewer holes in the collecting-baskets than was once the case; and that a very large percentage of the revenue is expended on the progressive development of the people and of their resources. It may not do them any harm to remember also that this province would never have been picked up, like an empty dish, so easily by the British, if it had not reeked with the blood of almost incessant and ruthless wars for five centuries, which left the country exhausted of its people and of its property; and that the present rapid increase in population and wealth is due to a strong and just government and to assured peace. It is, furthermore, too early to forget that no country can prosper when human life is the cheapest thing in the market, as it was in these regions under Burman, Shan, Talain, and Siamese kings.\*

\* Lest we forget:—With all Christendom spending many million pounds sterling, that ought to go into productive wealth and social betterment, for instruments of destruction, no Christian can point the finger of scorn at Buddhists; not a straight finger anyway. He has got to cock it a little at the second joint.

## LANGUAGE, AFFINITIES AND LETTERS.

NATURALLY the first question we ask of a language, as of a race, is : "Of whom were you born?" It is a wise child that can tell its own parentage, and the Indo-Chinese languages are not so wise. Did they all spring from a common mother who died in giving them birth? Or were they left on this doorstep of the Far East by the promiscuous cohabitation of various languages of the prehistoric past? Or did they spring up independently from the soil, as Minerva sprang from the head of Zeus? Various theories have been advocated; none has been conclusively proven. I am not so self-pretentious as to think that I can do any better, and I shall not even try. Some of the elements entering into the problem are interesting in themselves and may be mentioned, but the solution will be left to wiser heads and bolder hearts.

In describing how the "Pâli" alphabet was adopted by several races in the Indo-Chinese peninsula, and the eliminations and modifications made to adapt it to local requirements, Prof. Em. Forchhammer has occasion to say that there is "a large number of homonymous words, especially in Shan, widely different in meaning, and distinguished in spoken language by well-defined modulations in the utterance of the vowel element." He then gives this example, which is characteristic of the Shan language as a whole: "The word *kan*, for instance, written with two letters *k* and *n*, is capable of conveying sixteen distinct meanings, according as the vowel is pronounced with the high, low, middle or rising tone, with the teeth and lips either widely or but slightly open, with full or restrained expiration of breath." This is quite correct, except that he limited a little too narrowly the number



of meanings. What he says is only another way of saying that Shan, like Chinese and Karen, is a *tonal* language. It may be well, in passing, to add that all of the Indo-Chinese languages are not tonal; the various Mon dialects, like Talain and Palaung, are not; and such Tibeto-Burman languages as Burmese and Kachin are fast losing their tones, now that they are passing into the agglutinative stage. The arguments sometimes advanced, and assertions made with no argument at all, that the languages now known as tonal were not always so, but that tones were later adopted as a compensation for a certain degree of decadence in the languages themselves, are not convincing; but the subject belongs to the history of languages in general and need not detain us here. What evidence is there that the Chinese or the Shan language, for instance, was ever richer than it is to-day, with tones in full swing? There is none for the Shan certainly, whatever may or may not be true of the Chinese.

The next peculiarity of these Indo-Chinese languages to which this learned writer calls attention is the almost unlimited number of their "ding-dongs" and "bow-wows." These fall into two classes: those in which the second member, the dongs and the wows exist, or once existed, as independent words with the same meanings as those of the first members, the dings and the bows; and others in which the second members were only parts of onomatopoeic words with no independent meanings of their own. In order to ascertain what all this means, let us quote again from the Professor. His style of writing is somewhat heavy, but he expresses fully and accurately the phonetic laws on which these ding-dongs were built up:—

"In classifying Indo-Chinese roots upon principles of genetic connection a singular phonetic phenomenon reveals itself. Nearly all roots, whether used attributively, predicatively, or appellatively (for Indo-Chinese languages have no formal distinction between verb, noun or adjective) occur under two or more forms, possessing the same consonantal character, but various and different vowel elements, their nature in the parallel roots being always conditioned

by the vowel in the primary root, this peculiarity rests upon altogether different laws than *vowel harmony* in the Ural-Altaic languages." \*

For the Shan language, *ka-ki*, *hsuk-hsak*, *long-lang*, etc., may be taken as samples of these ding-dongs, which may be called "phonetic couplets" (Cushing) or "symbolic syntheses" (Forchhammer). But how did the second term in these ding-dongs and bow-wows arise? Dr. Cushing says that they may be the empty signs of dead words, but that he is inclined to think that they have grown out of the tonal character of the language to supply a demand for a slightly more emphatic form of expression than any afforded by simple words. Prof. Forchhammer declares that this view is untenable, and expresses his own view, thus: "Though in Shan they serve at present the ends of euphony and rhythmical cadence, yet in kindred languages they continue as independent and living roots." In his lists of words given, he quotes several instances to prove his point. The proof is all right in so far as it goes, but it falls short of all the facts. The learned writer quoted the words that served his purpose, but what on earth would or could he do with the many "dongs" that are not living roots in any language? Some of these words take as many as three different euphonic couplets (symbolic syntheses), just like some "ding" taking three different kinds of "dongs." Can the Professor show that all of them are, or ever were, independent words in some kindred language?

Continuing, the Professor says that the dongs and wows of these ding-dongs and bow-wows "are the common inheritance, apportioned in different measures, to all Indo-Chinese tongues, of a common parent language, which must have been prevailingly onomatopoetic, in which existed a more or less distant likeness between articulate signs and the acts and qualities designated." This statement again, so far as the Shan language is concerned (and I am not here concerned with any other), errs by excess. There are a very considerable number of words which appear to have been

\* *Indo-Chinese Languages*, by Prof. Em. Forchhammer (from a reprint from the *Indian Antiquary*).

made from the imitation of sounds or of acts, but the percentage is not large when compared with the whole. The Shan language is not now, and there is no evidence that it ever was, "prevailing onomatopoeic." The words cited are these: "tut tut—tat tat," to be very warm; "top ti—top tap," bending one way and then another; and "mōng mōng—mang mang," used to express brilliancy. A much longer list, of course, might have been given. Over this brilliant idea, the imaginative Professor grows poetic and says: "It is evident that a large portion of imitative couplets owe their origin and continuance in speech to external aspects of animal and vegetable life; to the peculiarities of mental and physical activity, customs, and habits of a people. The removal of a tribe from a mountainous region to a level seashore would gradually bring into disuse the numerous couplets, imitative of the sound of water now falling in cataracts, now gathering in pools, cool and dim, amidst impeding boulders, now meandering many-limbed between them, gently flowing or ruffled, whistling, bubbling, murmuring, with tribes of loquacious birds humming, buzzing insects lighting on ferns, and creeping along the banks; in short, of all the varied noises and voices which invest a mountainous vastness." But as a matter of fact, the Shans still live in the mountainous vastnesses where water still murmurs and where the birds still hum (and, by the way, both of these English verbs are onomatopoeic too). Why should they not retain their old imitative words and make new ones as fast as ever they did?

Another peculiar idea of the Professor is that these Indo-Chinese races began to learn to talk in this "tut tut—tat tat, top ti—top tap" fashion and, after they were able to do a little thinking for themselves, cut off three syllables from each and got the verbs "tut" and "top." He sums up his long and learned argument in this way: "I am persuaded that these couplets preceded the isolation of single roots as exponents of an abstract idea." I am not so persuaded. Did the English, to get the abstract idea (I) "am," first say "am um—am im" and then, after forty centuries, cut off the long tail and say simply "am"? Or to get the concept "tree," did they first say "tree tum—tree tim" and then,

after a geologic period, have sense enough to lop off the branches and say simply "tree"? It is true that an infant says "Mum-mum" or "Mamma," and after he is grown and goes to school, he may cut off one syllable and say simply "Ma"; but this is not from a higher power of abstraction and idealization, but from pure impertinence. If his father with a horsewhip should take him by the ear and lead him out into the woodshed, his utterance, for a few minutes, would revert to the onomatopoetic form, irrespective of his powers of ratiocination. Why should it take greater power of idealization to say "go," than to say "go gee—go gaw" and then, after passing out of the stone into the brass age, say simply "pack," and be done with it? I am persuaded that that is just what they did say, and that the longer forms (all of which are adverbs) grew out of the shorter, rather than the reverse as Prof. Forchhammer claims. The whole presupposition that certain languages were once polysyllabic and have since degenerated into monosyllabism appears fanciful in the extreme; but the argument may look more ludicrous than it is, though I am inclined to think that it is more ludicrous than it looks.

Prof. Forchhammer contended that, in all probability, all the languages of Indo-China descended from a common parent. That there may have been a common great-grandmother—nobody knows where or when—is possible. There is certainly much to be said in favour of such a contention. It is equally certain that a good deal can be said against it. The difficult question is by no means settled. At first glance, Prof. Forchhammer's lists of words (some of which are given further on) do look as though the languages represented in them (and the lists might have been extended to take in several others) did come from one primitive language, either of Indo-China or from some unknown region beyond. We should not forget, however, that the words in the lists were selected and put there because they resemble one another, and that they comprise but a very small percentage of the total of words in the languages represented. They were picked out from thousands of others that do not resemble one another more

than a red beet resembles a green cabbage. There may therefore be some other way to account for their presence quite as satisfactory as the presupposition of a common great-grandmother. Such lists of words as the Professor prepared, with an axe to grind, have their value and uses ; but comparative lists of common words, taken at random, without any preconceived theory to maintain, would show more clearly and accurately to what degree the languages concerned are related. If, in long lists of words, taken as they come, a large percentage common to various languages are found, the Professor's contention might hold good. A short list only (from lack of space) of this kind will soon be given. Any one, particularly interested in the subject, can find longer lists of words, or whole dictionaries for some of these Indo-Chinese languages elsewhere.

That the Shan and the Mon races came into their present seats from central and southern China there is little reason to doubt. That there are still a few words common to the two languages (as represented by modern dialects) is known ; that such words may have been more numerous in times past is quite possible. But whether the two languages came originally from a common parent, or whether the words now used in common came from intermingling and borrowing is not conclusively known. If there was a common mother she may have lived long enough ago to have made bricks for the tower of Babel.

Comments similar to those on the Shan and the Mon may be made on the Shan and the Chinese. The Shans and the Mons were once important races in central and southern China. The Chinese first imposed their civilization on many of them and then absorbed them. In absorbing them it is not only natural but inevitable that they would absorb their languages in part with them. The scores of Shan words in the Chinese language may have come from a common mother ; they may also have come from borrowing. The same may be true of the Chinese in the Shan. It may have been merely a case of give and take, with as many words loaned by the one party as by the other. M. Terrien asserts that "the phonesis, morphology, and sematology of the

(Chinese) language bear their testimony to the great influence of the native tongues." "I take it," he says, "that the postposition of the adverb to the verb in the Taoist books is due to Shan influence."\* The postposition of the genitive to its noun, in the Book of Poetry, he traces to the same source. Continuing, he says, "We know that Taoism was largely influenced by the Shan." If Laotse was born, reared, and wrote in Ts'u, he may have been a Shan by race. Whether he was or not is not important, but M. Terrien's conclusion is, if true. He sums up his findings thus: "The loan of words has been extensive on both sides, native and Chinese, and reached to a considerable amount." Such quotations do not indicate a common parentage of the races or a primitive language from which they one and all descended—unless, forsooth, one goes back far into those prehistoric times in which nothing is known and anything may be assumed.

Of the influence of the indigenous races of China on the alien Chinese race, an able writer says: "The primitive Chinese type, that imported by the immigrants who founded the civilization of China, is, we believe, no longer to be discerned. In the south and central regions (ancient habitat of Mons and Shans) it has everywhere been modified by combination with the aboriginal inhabitants, leading to provincial characteristics, which the practised eye can easily recognize" (*The Lore of Cathay*, p. 424). If the primitive type has been so modified as no longer to be discerned, it is practically certain that combination with the aboriginal inhabitants has brought about a similar modification in the primitive Chinese language. It is quite possible that not one of the words now common to the Chinese, Shan, Mon, Tibetan, and other languages, was in that primitive Chinese language at all. It is, of course, rank heresy to question the existence of Shakespere, of Homer, and of this Common Mother, but it is certainly a strong argument that leaves nothing to be said on the other side. This from Major Davies (*Yünnan*, p. 368) is of the same tenor as the foregoing. He says: "It seems historically

\* *The Languages of China before the Chinese*, p. 16.

certain that the Chinaman of the present day has grown up out of the gradual welding into one empire of Tartar tribes from the north, and of Mon-Khmer, Shan, and possibly to some extent Tibeto-Burman races who were originally in occupation of much of the country which has grown into China."

Now it is only fair to give, at least in tabloid form, the argument on which the common-mother theory rests. It stands in the main on two legs: "antiphonous parallel roots" and "split double-initial consonants." Prof. Forchhammer gives a few samples of the former, from which we may take the following. He starts in with the Shan *ka*, with its couplet *ki*, and gives *chi*, *ghi*, and *kyi* as the Chinese, Karen, and Burmese form of the word respectively. The word means "mucilaginous," and could have stuck to neighbours, whatever their own language may have been. Then he gives us the Shan *pan*, with its couplet *pin*, meaning to twirl or to spin (occurring also in the aspirated forms *p'an* and *p'in*, to twist tight and hard), and finds that the word either in the one form or the other appears in several of the southern Chinese dialects; also in Anamite as *wan*; in Talain as *bon*; and in Burmese and Karen as *pan phi*, or *wi*—but in order to make out his list of "antiphonous parallel roots" he lugs in words that mean to draw or to pull, as a cat by the tail. This may be scientific, but the scientist seems to be hard up for material. His next word is the Shan *mep* or *met* (which may have had an earlier form, *map* or *mat*), reappearing in three of the dialects of southern China as *bat*, *bit*, or *mit*; in Anamite as *mat*; in Talain as *bah* (which may be significant); and in Karen as *pa* (which seems to father them all).

So far as the so-called southern Chinese dialects are concerned, it is noticeable that they all come from regions south of the Yangtse, where Mr. Hallett says that the Shans "actually form one of the chief ingredients that compose the so-called Chinese race," and where Major Davies asserts that the Shans probably inhabited a greater part of the territory and where some of them (the Cantonese) are probably chiefly Shan in blood. This seems to say that

these "antiphonous parallel roots" are merely Shan provincialisms that have survived along with the strain of Shan blood.\* Neither is the presence of a few of these common roots in Anamite, Talain, and Karen a matter of surprise at all: they were all neighbours in China for centuries before coming into their present seats.

As to the "split double-initial" consonant theory, the claim is that many words that now are short and beautiful were once long and ugly, with double consonants at the beginning and two or three consonants at the end. Later, these double-initial consonants split, one language or dialect preferring one of the elements and some other language or dialect preferring the other, followed, it may be, with the utter loss of the final consonants, and later by a modification of the vowel sound. Prof. Forchhammer cites, in this connection, the Burmese word "myi(n)," with *y* after the initial *m* and a final nasal vowel or consonant at the end. He claims that the Shan "ma" (horse) with its couplet *mi*, is a simpler form growing up, so to speak, from phonetic decay. There are several of these short and beautiful words in Shan that appear elsewhere in longer and uglier forms, with *l*, *r* or *y* inserted after the initial consonant, and sometimes with final consonants added. They all came, it is asserted, from a common mother, and the longer and uglier are also the older forms. Ugliness is a sign of age. The common mother looked that way and talked that way. The reappearance of ugliness anywhere or at any time is merely an evidence of reversion to type. This all sounds very plausible and in some instances seems to be perfectly correct. The chief fault to be found with it is, it does not account for all the facts.

Major Davies has given us a recent as well as a very clear and popular statement of the theory. He says: "It is generally admitted now that the words of the Sinitic languages as spoken at the present day have been much shortened by a process of phonetic decay. A comparison of

\* "The French *ü* and German *ö*" (so common in the Shan) seem to be peculiar to the Cantonese dialect. See *The Chinese Recorder*, December 1910, p. 796.



written Tibetan or Burmese with the present spoken languages, or of the old Chinese sounds with the modern Pekingese, goes to prove this. Words that originally began or ended with two or three consonants together have been whittled down to words of two or three letters. . . . It is those languages which still retain the initial double consonants which are of the most value for showing the connection between words which would otherwise appear unlike. In the process of phonetic decay, the initial double consonant has been simplified into a single consonant, but it has often happened that one language has preferred one of those consonants and another sister language has preferred the other. The result naturally is that two words which really have a common origin become totally dissimilar in sound." It is practically certain that this is the way in which it was done in some instances, though it may not hold of all the words quoted in its defence.

The Palaungs, for instance, whose language is full of breathy German gutturals and rolling Scottish *r*'s, commonly insert *y*, *r* or *l* sounds in pronouncing Shan words, whether those words have been incorporated into their language or not. Neither can much be made of the Burman conversion, if such it be, of *ma* to *myin* (or the reverse). They disgrace themselves and the Shan language in a similar way in mispronouncing Shan words every day. The very fact that they have double-initial consonants and a final nasal vowel in their language helps to account for it. It is, in part at least, a matter of habit in vocalization. The word for "hot" is *hawn* in Shan, *rawn* in Siamese, and *hrang* in Palaung; the last form, we are told, gives a clue to the connection. Does it? The Palaungs, in speaking Shan, often run in *r*, *l*, or *y* sounds simply because such double-initial consonants are frequent in their own language. It may be purely a matter of brogue and may throw no light on the age or origin of the word spoken. The Shan *hai*, the Siamese *rai*, and the K'a-mu *hre*, "a highland rice field" (all taken from Major Davies) may be explained in the same way. There is a certain fixity of the vocal organs of various races, the result of their peculiar and habitual

vocalization, which must be taken into account.\* There is another difficulty with this ugliness is a sign of age theory: a word in its simple and beautiful form may be found in Peking, and a longer and uglier form of the same word may be found in Bangkok; or it may be that the simple form occurs, or occurred centuries ago, in Lhasa and the less simple is now used in Rangoon; never mind, that *y*, *r* or *l* inserted in the word, with perhaps other changes, is positive proof that it is the older form. This is surprising, but not impossible.

That certain words are better explained by this old age theory than by any other is scarcely open to doubt. Take, for instance, the words given by Major Davies on page 356 of his book. There is that ugly word, "mrul" or "brum" (wind), which must sound like the croaking of a frog, but after passing through many kaleidoscopic changes it reappears as *mu*, *fong* and *le*. Here seems to be a real attempt during the passing of the years to humanize the sound. Or we may take the next word he gives, "k'rawk" (six), with an original sound like the squawk of a hen, this reappears as *hu*, *hok*, *dro*, *tuk*, etc. This seems to show the same humanizing tendency. But, at best this can prove a common mother for certain words, not for whole languages. Away back, nobody knows just where or when, some dominant race may have imposed its language on various races, as the Burmese are imposing their language on the various races of this province, these races may afterwards have spread over Indo-China, driving out or assimilating the earlier inhabitants (Negrito or other), only to retain in varying degrees the language thus imposed.

It is not at all necessary to go far back into some uncertain and foggy past, and assume conditions that may have existed by which various languages (or races) might have mixed. We have the conditions here and now. Take a stroll in the Kengtung bazar (Southern Shan States) on any

\* An interesting instance of this brogue may be seen in the name for a monastery: Mandarin-Chinese, *kung*; Amoy dialect, *kiong*; Tavoyan, *klong*; Burmese, *kyaung*; Shan, *kyawng*. See *Burmese Sketches*, p. 187.

bazar-day and listen. Here is a group of Shans, Chinese, Was, Akhas, Lahus, and others, all talking glibly in the Shan language, the language of social and commercial intercourse between the different races of that region. This has been going on for decades and probably for several centuries. It is enough to account for Shan words incorporated into every language of every race and tribe there represented, at least for that region. A similar thing has been going on in Burma for the Burman language, with an overlapping of the groups; and the same thing is true of south-western China, with more overlapping. Such intermingling has been going on, group after group, in Indo-China for centuries. Here is Babel out-babelled. A confusion of tongues thrice confounded. Why assume a common mother either of races or of languages? No theorist has yet drawn a four-ace hand.

It may therefore be claimed that the supposition that these multiplex and multiform languages had at least two or three mothers is just as reasonable as the supposition that they had but one. The present writer, notwithstanding all that he has said against it, is inclined to think that the common-mother theorists have made a very strong argument. When the best possible argument has been made out against the theory, it still remains difficult to explain the presence of the same word, in the same or a slightly different form in so many of these languages, without postulating a common mother for that word. When scores of words are found of which this is true, the supposition of a common parentage of the languages themselves is very strong indeed. Books on the speech of the Chinese, Siamese, Shan, Karen, Tibetan, Burmese, Kachin, and other of these languages, have been published, so that—as Major Davies points out—there is now abundant material for a comparative study of at least the three great families, Chinese, Shan, and Tibeto-Burman. He goes so far as to say: “That the result of such a comparison discloses a fairly close original connection between these three families is hardly open to question.”

His next statement is stronger still: “Were we able to get at the languages spoken by the ancestors of these races

thousands of years ago, it would probably be difficult to find words in any of these families which are *not* connected with words in the other two." This is too cocksure. We know nothing, and can safely assume nothing, of the original languages thousands of years ago. They may have been farther apart then than they are now.

The Chinese language may be of great value for comparative linguistic study, but it should be borne in mind that, if, racially, "the primitive Chinese type, that imported by the immigrants who founded the civilization of China, is no longer to be discerned," it must also be true linguistically. For, from earliest times, the Chinese have been constantly absorbing the various languages of the different races among whom they dwelt and over whom they extended their culture.\* It is conceded that the average Chinaman of to-day is a pot-pourri of Mongol-Tartars, Lao-Shans, Tibeto-Burmans, peppered with Mon-Khmers. A very large percentage of Chinese words might very likely be found in some one or more of the languages of these peoples for the simple reason that these are the sources from which such words came. And, what is worse, their presence there would prove but little either as to the affinity of the original Chinaman or of his language. What is true of the Chinese is true of all the other races. We do not know the ultimate origin of any of them. Among them all there has been the same intermingling and absorption, though perhaps not in every instance to so large a degree, constantly producing new language mixtures and racial types. A student of languages can scarcely adopt any particular theory before he will see so much against it that he will be disposed to give it up.

\* Of the value of the Chinese language for comparative linguistic purposes, Mr. Taw Sein Ko says: "The Chinese language is of great value for purposes of comparative philology, because it has an extensive literature, and a long period of definite history, and because approximate or correct dates are given of periodic changes, whether dynastic, political, social, or religious. The Chinese language constitutes the one strong and trustworthy pivot round which the changes of the languages of the Indo-Chinese races may be grouped." This may be freely granted, but it does not affect the claim which I aim to make here, which is that the Chinese language of to-day must, in the very nature of the case, be to a large extent what he is pleased to call "a mechanical mixture"; as contrasted with racial mixtures which, he says, are "chemical." The distinction is accurate but of no special importance in this instance.

Major Davies is inclined to think that the Lolos, tall, well-built, fair, with prominent noses, have Aryan blood in them. No one can doubt the possibility of this; and it goes to show how difficult it is to definitely locate the origin of any of these races. They are not unlike "a shining drop of quicksilver which you put your finger on, and it isn't there." Students of the Japanese language say that English words have already crept into that language; with heads and tails cut off to suit ideographs and a monosyllabic speech, they may hereafter creep even faster into the language of the Chinese. It is not impossible that some learned philologist, four thousand years from now, may argue that the Mongol-Chinese and the Aryan-Saxons dwelt together in the tents of Shem.

For my comparative words, taken at random, I have taken the first fifty words from Major Davies' list—that is fair, and shows that there is no picking and choosing. The Shan words are from Dr. Cushing's Dictionary; the Karen (from the Bghai dialect) were supplied by Mr. Heptonstall; the Mon words were supplied in part by Mrs. Milne, from the Palaung dialect, supplemented by words from Palaung and other Mon dialects from Major Davies to fill out the list; the (written) Burmese are from Dr. Judson's Dictionary. The very large percentage of common or loan words is at once manifest. Some of these still have the same form, others vary somewhat, but might be traced to a "common mother," or to a large amount of intermingling and borrowing, according to the predilection of the theorist.

	SHAN	KAREN	PALAUNG	BURMESE (written)
Man (human being)	.. kon (p'u)	pgha	bi	lu
Man (male)	.. kon-sai (p'u)	po-kwa	a-po (i-me)	yawk-kya
Woman	.. kon (p'u)	ying po-mu	i-pan	min-ma
Child	.. luk	po-tha	k'awn-ne	ka-le
Father	.. paw	pa	kun (?)*	a-p'a
Mother	.. me	mo	ma	a-me

\* "Kun," I fancy, is merely the Shan word "*k'un*" meaning lord, master, etc.; "*te*" (Wa), "*a-ta*" (P'u-man), "*apuk*" (Khmer), or some other form, was probably the genuine Mon word.

	SHAN	KAREN	PALAUNG	BURMESE (written)
Son	.. luk-sai	po-kwa	k'aun-ku	s'a
Head	.. ho	klo	king	u-k'awng
Face	.. na	meh	na-muk	myak-hna
Nose	.. ku-lang (dang)	nasi	ka-dong-mu	hna-k'awng
Mouth	.. s'op (pak)	ta-kho	mur	hnut
Ear	.. hu	na	sok	na
Eye	.. ta	meh	ngai	myak-tsi
Hair	.. k'on-ho	kho-thoo	hu	ts'an
Tooth	.. k'eo	meh	hrang	s'wa
Tongue	.. lin	play	sa-ta	hlya
Back	.. lang	kler	ka-du	kraw
Stomach	.. tawng (pom)	herper	wat	wam (pok)
Leg	.. k'a	khaw	jan	k're
Arm	.. k'en	su	tai	lak
Hat	.. mawk-ho	kho-plaw	klep	u-t'up (k'amauk)
Turban	.. k'in-ho	kho-per	ka-me	k'awngpawng
Coat	.. s'o	aw-ki	ka-byok	ang-gyi
Trousers	.. kon	plaw-ki	sa-la	pawng-bi
Shoe	.. s'awk-tin	khaw-pi	chup (chap)	bi-nap
Bag	.. t'ong	ter	jan	it
Sword	.. lap (liao)	nat	bot	t'a
Spear	.. hawk	baw	yö	hlam
Gun	.. kawng	klo	sa-nat	s'a-nat
Bow	.. kang	kli	kang	le
Arrow	.. pün	pla	pün	hmra
Stick	.. k'awn	naw-kay	k'awn	dut
House	.. Hön	hee	ka-lep (kang)	im
Door	.. p'ak-tu	peh-traw	pa-lo	tam-k'a
Thatch	.. k'a	k'hee	plong	s'ak-kay
Floor	.. p'ak	poo-da	la-me	kram
Post	.. s'ao	hee-too	rang	tong
Plank	.. pyen	thay-ba	pyen	pyan-pza
Horse	.. ma (mi)	k'thay	brang	mrang
Buffalo	.. kwai	p'na	kwai	kywe
Cow	.. wo-me (ngo-me)	klaw-mo	mak	nwa-ma
Pig	.. mu	toh	lai	wak
Goat	.. pe (me)	meh-tehleh	be	ts'it
Dog	.. ma	twee	a-o (saw)	k'we
Cat	.. miao	th'meeyaw	a-ngau	krawng
Chicken	.. kai	hsaw	io	krak
Chicken's egg	k'ai-kai	hsaw-di	bon-io	krak-u
Bird	.. nok	to-po	s'im	hngak
Fish	.. pa (nga)	nya	ka	nga
Tiger	.. s'ö	baw-th'oh	la-wai (ravai)	kya

In this comparative list, the first thing we notice is that the words for father and mother are the "papa" and "mamma" of our childhood. Possibly they may suggest a common parentage for all languages. Then running down the list, we notice a total of thirteen words, in the same or a slightly variant form, in the Karen, that are manifestly the same as the Shan words of the same meaning; in the Mon column (mostly Palaung) we see eleven words like the Shan; in the Burmese it is easy to count up nine words that are like the Shan. Some of these words may be from a common mother, others are due to borrowing in recent times. No sensible man could wish to deny that good people may borrow words, as they do umbrellas, and forget to return them. In the Kachin dictionary, for instance, one recognizes several Shan words. Most of them were borrowed, and the Kachins never return anything. It is noticeable, however, that these words are often the names of articles made by the Shans or of articles bought in the Shan bazars. But, even if we allow that one-half of the words which are alike were borrowed in comparatively recent times, that does not account for the other half. Take the words in the list for "head": *ho*, *klo*, *king*, (u)*k'awng*. It is certainly the same word right through. *K'awng* dropped into *king*, in Palaung; a Karen blew his nose and blew the nasal "ng" off, leaving *k'aw*, which softened down into *klo*; a Shan also, neat in his habits, blew off the nasal, and then softened *k'aw* into *k'o*, which easily slid into *ho*. Try the word for "bow." We see the same process. According to the ugliness is a sign of age theory, the ancient form may have been "*klang*"; the Shans here dropped out the "l" as useless timber; the Karens dropped the nasal, leaving *kla*; the final vowel oscillated for a time, like the rear car of a train, and finally settled down as we now have it, giving us *kli*. The lazy Burmans dropped off a little from both ends, and settled down on "*le*" as easier to say than anything else. Of course the original form of the word might have been borrowed through intermingling, and the changes may have taken place at a later time, but the common-mother theory

does seem to fit the case a little better in such instances as these. The unbelieving may jeer and say: "yes, certainly; and so may one assume that the Karen 'po' (person) is derived from the Greek-English 'hy-po-thesis.' All one needs to do is to cut off the 'hy' at one end and the 'thesis' at the other, and there you are."

This list, on the whole, supports Dr. Forchhammer's contention that such words and others "are the common inheritance, apportioned in different measures to all Indo-Chinese tongues, of a common parent language," etc., and supports it better than his own lists of selected words. It also, in so far as it goes, supports Mr. Lowis in his claim that "it is now established that the Karen speech is more closely allied to the Shan than to the vernaculars of the Tibeto-Burman branch or of the Mon family." The list here given is cut to fifty words from lack of space; but if it had been clipped off at five hundred, doubtless the percentage of common, or loan, words would not have been seriously affected. As to the "common-mother" and the "borrowing" theories, I am not capable of thinking a *think* that would be of any value to thinkers. My own opinion is that both theories are correct, if not carried to excess—*i.e.*, that some of the words that are alike in these Indo-Chinese languages may be traced to a common mother, and that others of them, and perhaps the larger number, may be due to borrowing; but only a philologist who can spend all his time in this workshop, and has abundance of materials to work on, can produce a product that would be worth a penny's purchase. Of one thing I am confident, and that is that there is not another spot in the world so inviting to a philologist as the Indo-Chinese peninsula, and not another of the same size of which so little is really known.\*

\* The Lieutenant-Governor of Burma, Sir Harvey Adamson, in a recent address given at the annual meeting of the Burma branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society (Rangoon), said: "The curse of Babel appears to have descended on Burma with portentous severity: 75 indigenous languages are spoken, in addition to 35 non-indigenous Asiatic and European languages, and it is doubtful whether that catalogue is complete."—*The Rangoon Gazette*, 26th January 1914.



Of the peculiarities of the Shan grammatical structure little need to be said. Ordinarily, the subject comes first, followed by its qualifiers; then comes the verb, followed by its object, whether direct or indirect; the object again is followed by its qualifiers; and last comes the adverb modifying the preceding verb. Prepositions are in the place indicated by the word and are not postpositions as in Burmese. To the foregoing there is an exception: if the object of a verb is a clause, it always comes first in the sentence, and for emphasis any object may come first. The object appears never to come between the subject and the verb as in Burmese. Genitives follow their nouns like other noun qualifiers. In poetry, to meet the demands of rhyme and rhythm and tonal cadence, words are often thrown out of their natural places, as in all languages.

From our Western point of view, the most peculiar thing about the grammar of the Shan language is the utter absence of any relative pronoun. Captain Forbes seems to have been the first to discern this fact so far as the Shan language is concerned. He says: "One peculiarity of the class of languages which is sometimes designated Turanian, sometimes Mon-Aryan, is the absence of a true relative pronoun. This is generally expressed by what is called a relative participle. In the Dravidian dialects, in the Japanese, the Chinese, Tibeto-Burman, Tai (Shan), and other languages of eastern Asia, this rule holds good."\* In support of his claim, Captain Forbes cites some pertinent remarks from Caldwell: "Though the use of a relative participle, instead of a relative pronoun, is characteristic of the Scythian (Turanian) tongues, yet both the Turkish and the Finnish languages possess a relative pronoun as well. The use of such a pronoun seems foreign to the grammatical structure of these languages, and is reasonably supposed to have been imitated from the usage of languages of the Indo-European stock." He further quotes Edkins as giving the reason for the absence of the relative pronoun: "The reason why the eastern Asiatic nations did not adopt

\* *Languages of Further India*, p. 128.

a relative with full powers is found in the nature of their grammar. The subordinate sentence must in their languages come before the principal one. A sentence whose nominative is a relative pronoun (with us) is with them a subordinate sentence, and speech in their languages cannot expand itself by a series of subordinate or circumstantial clauses coming after that which contains the nominative and principal verb." The man who went to market, in the Shan, would be: "the going to market man."\* By this peculiar construction, the relative "who" entirely disappears from the sentence. It is not always so easy to get rid of poor relations. It does not seem desirable here to enter far into the peculiarities of the Shan grammatical structure. The consideration of such things may be left to grammarians and to special students of the language. One or two other peculiarities only will be mentioned here.

There is in Shan no proper passive voice. This seems to be true also of this whole group of languages. If we should replace the Mon by the Shan words, then what Captain Forbes says of the former language might be quoted word for word as applying to the Shan: "Passivity is expressed by turning the sentence and employing the active form: thus, 'he is loved by his father' would be rendered by 'his father loves him'; 'the wood is split for the fire' by 'they have split wood for the fire.' In Anamese the verbal roots *chiu* or *phai*, signifying to suffer, are sometimes used to express a passive sense: as *toi da chiu*, lit. 'I beating suffered' for 'I have been beaten.' A similar idiom is found in Burmese, e.g., *ayaik khan byi*, 'beating suffered have' . . . . and in other eastern Asian languages." Shan is

\* It may be invidious to pick flaws with such an excellent book as that of Captain Forbes, but he inadvertently made a mistake that ought to be corrected. "In the Mon-Anam," we are told, "as in the most of the east and west Himalayan languages, the verbal root, with its complements of time and place, etc., may be used as the subject and placed at the beginning of the sentence," thus: "he has gone to buy cattle in the village" is rendered by "he to buy cattle in the village go done (went)." Here, manifestly, according to the rendering given, "to buy cattle," etc., is not the subject of the verb but an infinitive of purpose used adverbially. The thought was probably expressed in this way, as it often is: "the (going to buy cattle in the village) man went." Here we have a participial phrase qualifying the subject, which is quite a different thing from saying that it is itself the subject.

one of these other "eastern Asian languages" to which the rule applies. For "I have been beaten," the Shan would say "I suffered beating." There is nothing passive in that, except perhaps passive resistance.

The difference between the grammatical structure of the Tibeto-Burman and the Mon-Shan groups of languages is clean cut. The difference is about as great as is possible in the formation of sentences; still there are peculiarities which are alike, as the absence of a relative pronoun and of a passive voice. In some respects the Chinese seems to drop about half-way between the two. The most tenacious thing in any language is its grammatical structure, as everybody knows that knows anything about it at all. Unquestionably more reliable arguments can be made from the respective grammatical formation of languages, in trying to find out the relation that exists between them, than can be made from mere lists of words. But it so happens that among all the languages of the world the number of distinctively varied schemes of grammatical formation can almost be counted on the fingers of one hand. If two hands were taken, there would be several fingers to spare. Hence, even arguments from grammatical structure must be built up with great care. Certainly quite different languages might, by the purest accident, have practically the same formation. When practically the same grammatical structure and a large number of common or loan words are found in two or more languages, there is ground for a reasonable presumption that they may have come from the same parentage; but presumption is not conclusive proof. Thus we find Mr. Lowis saying: "It is now established that his (the Karen) speech is more closely allied to the Shan than to the vernaculars of the Tibeto-Burman branch or of the Mon-Khmer family, and his language must be looked on as indicating his racial origin. . . . We can take it . . . that the Shan-Karen connection runs extremely far back."\* I understand Mr. Lowis to say, in effect, here that the Shan and the Karen

\* C. C. Lowis, I.C.S., *The Tribes of Burma* (Rangoon, 1910).

racés, and their languages, "run extremely far back" to a common great-grandmother somewhere. That may be. But the evidence is slender. The Karen, like the Shan, is a tonal language; and it resembles the Shan somewhat closely in its grammatical formation; there is also a very considerable number of words common to their respective vocabularies. On the other side, it may be said that the tonal systems are unlike; the grammatical structure of the two languages is not identical; and as they were neighbours in China for centuries before coming into their present seats (and since) the kindred words may be due to intermingling.

Evidence of an anthropological nature has recently risen from a new quarter, in what is called the birth-mark theory. Considerable attention was given to it in the *Census Report of Burma* (1911). It certainly has the advantage of being free from some of the difficulties that beset comparative philology. It is based on physiological rather than on linguistic science. This is so new and so surprising that a few lines may be quoted. The Report says: "In this connection, with the census, an attempt was made to follow up a suggestion made by Herr Bealz that certain birth-marks may be an important criterion for distinguishing members of the Mongolian race. The phenomena and the problem may be stated in a translation of his own words." Here a few lines of the letter:

"I now come to a test which is one of the most interesting in the whole of Anthropology, *viz.*, the blue patches on the skin of Mongolian children. Until I described them eighteen years ago, these patches, strange to say, had never been considered; and even now they appear to be unknown to most anthropologists. Every Chinese, every Korean, Japanese and Malay is born with a dark-blue patch of irregular shape in the lower sacral region. . . . These patches generally disappear in the first year of life, but sometimes they last for several years."

After giving much evidence from this province, the *Census* concludes: "The reports indicate that among the indigenous races of the province (Burmese, Karens, Taungthus, Chins, Kachins, Shans, Talaings, Danus, Inthas,

Taunggyos) and their sub-tribes, the existence of a coloured patch of irregular shape in the lower sacral region is almost, if not quite, universal. The colour is generally dark blue, but variations in colour from dark brown and dull reddish to pink have been observed."

I too noticed, several years ago, these dark patches on the posteriorities of Shan babies, but owing to a religious misconception I attributed them to Karma. To me then they indicated only that the babies had been spanked in some previous existence for stealing jam from the cupboard. This shows how religious misconceptions often blind well-meaning people to the significance of valuable scientific discoveries. This new discovery is bound to come to something. The next step naturally will be: Some Mongolians have patches, therefore all races, and tribes, and clans, and coteries, and sewing-circles, and tea-parties with bridge and tiddle-de-winks, that have patches are Mongolians. And perhaps they are. At all events, it is evident that anthropologists have hitherto been tackling the wrong end of the proposition. These patches may give us racial affinities with greater certainty than any argument from language; though it might be delicate, and difficult and dangerous for any Government to enforce professional examination in all cases. But why, pray, call them "Mongolian" rather than Tartarian? or Chinarian? or Troglodarian? No one knows who, or where, or which, the original Mongols were, any more than one knows who the original Tartars were, or the original Chinese. "Mongol" is only a name, which may mean much or nothing; usually nothing. Why not call them all Patcharians, or Lower Sacral Patcharians? That would be long enough and ugly enough for new anthropological nomenclature, and would take in the sewing-circles very nicely.

There is more fun in racial and linguistic affinities than in the Glorious Fourth with lemonade and fire-crackers, but this cannot go on for ever; a little space must be reserved for the Shan alphabet and literature. Mr. C. O. Blagden says that all the Tai (Shan) alphabets that he remembers having seen belong to the southern Indian type. "They seem," he says, "to be clearly traceable to the same stream

of culture which brought this type of alphabet to Camboja and the Talaing country." If any scholar has seen any Shan alphabet that did not come from this stream of culture, some of us would be very glad to see it. It might help to answer one or two unanswered questions. The Siamese alphabet which seems to be largely of Cambodian Sanskrit origin may be an exception. Major Davies says (*Yünnan*, p. 383): "The fact seems to be that only those Shans who have come to some extent under Burmese and Siamese influence have either the Buddhist religion or a system of writing. . . I doubt whether in the south-east of Yünnan or in any of the provinces further eastward there are any Shans who profess Burmese Buddhism or have any written character." Dr. Dodd (previously quoted) says the same. All the Shan alphabets that we know anything about came, in the main, from the Talain, with slight traces in some of them of the Cambodian. Of the 45 consonants in the Lao alphabet—46 including one letter sometimes classed as a nasal vowel—only seven show Cambodian influence. The Siamese use the Cambodian in sacred writings and naturally it has had a greater influence over their alphabet than over the others. How soon after the "Pâli" alphabet was introduced into the coastal regions of the Indo-Chinese peninsula it crept up, in modified forms, into the hills beyond we cannot now say with certainty. It is generally conceded that it was introduced into the coastal regions of Lower Burma, Siam and Cambodia not later than the earlier part of the fifth century of our era.

If it is safe to draw inferences from the rapid growth and spread of Pâli Buddhism among the Burmans in the basin of the Irrawaddy, we would be justified in saying that it would not take very long. Among the Burmans the religious enthusiasm begotten by this new religious impulse is almost beyond belief. In a small way, there may have been some earlier beginnings of Pâli Buddhism among the Burmans, but, for practical purposes, the introduction of this form of Buddhism into the basin of the Irrawaddy is commonly reckoned from the middle of the eleventh century, during the reign of Anawrata, and by the middle of the following

century it had risen to the height of its splendor. That was the creative age of Pâli Buddhism among the Burmans.\* Given "the impulsive power of a new affection" and the subsequent growth may be most rapid. We think at once of the "triumphant blossoming of Buddhism" among the Khmers of Cambodia, where it "blossomed" out in works of art that are magnificent even in their ruins.

To get a picture of it in the eye, one may well gaze on M. Louis de Carne's description of the temple of Angcor. Though beautiful, it is too long, and perhaps too familiar, to reproduce here. "I shall ever recall," he says, "the profound impression the spectacle excited. . . . I had, as it were, a shock of astonishment." There are descriptions of other temples, not so familiar, and they too show that there was the same shock of astonishment.

I came across an interesting article by James Campbell, Esq.,† in which he describes the Cambodian temples, Nakon Wat and Nakon Hluang. Of them he says: "Situated about 15 miles north of Talae Sap, hidden in a forest of old growth and great density, stand some of the most interesting relics of antiquity—the ruins of Nakon Wat and Nakon Hluang. Enveloped as are these ruins in the most unfathomable mysteries, unpossessed of any tradition beyond mere conjecture and popular rumour which can throw no light on their origin or foundation, and surpassing in splendor of design and beauty of architecture the most renowned remnants of bygone ages to be found in Hindostan, they offer to the student of Asiatic archæology matter for the most profound research, which it is to be hoped some philo-Asiatic may yet undertake. In truth, Nakon Wat stands like a mighty sphinx frowning contemptuously on the infantine and barbaric state of the arts and science of the people who are now the denizens of the forests and plains in its vicinity, and presents, with its towers and halls so pregnant with mystery and evidences of the past, a wondrous enigma which

\* Northern (Sanskrit) Buddhism had long existed in the basin of the Irrawaddy before the introduction of Southern (Pâli) Buddhism, but it had become corrupt and decadent. See *Burmese Sketches*, p. 181, *seq.*

† *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. XIII, 1860, p. 185.

challenges the wisdom of the world to fathom." He then gives a charming description of these two temples. He also gives a definite date: "In the third century, A.D. 200, the Cambodian monarch lived who founded Nakon Wat." \* The date given may be traditional. It may be safer to say that this "triumphant blossoming" of Buddhism in Cambodia took place as late as the fifth century. We may conjecture, if we wish, that the introduction of Buddhism into Cambodia was in the fifth century and that it blossomed in the sixth. But one thing is certain: given the conversion of a king, like Anawrata, after it was introduced, and Buddhism might have risen to the height of its splendor within a single century, as it did in the basin of the Irrawaddy.

\* M. Henri Mouhot says: "It is my belief that, without exaggeration, the date of some of the oldest parts of Ongcor the Great may be fixed at more than 2,000 years ago, and the more recent not much later," but he confesses that this is only a conjecture. See *Travels in the Central Parts of Indo-China, Siam, Cambodia and Laos*, Vol. II, p. 23.

Dr. Forchhammer assigns these temples to a later date. He says: "From the sixth to the eleventh centuries, the political history of the Talaings is a blank. During this period, the ancient kingdom of Khmer or Camboja attained to its fullest power; it extended from the Gulf of Martaban to Tonquin. The kings who ruled over Khmer, from the year 548 A.D. to the eleventh century, favoured Brahmanism to the almost total exclusion and suppression of Buddhism. The splendid ruins of Khmer date from this period; the temples are dedicated to Siva and Vishnu; the inscriptions are written in Sanskrit. Camboja is the great kingdom of Zabej of the Arabian geographers, which, in the eighth and ninth centuries, extended also over the group of islands south and west of Malacca, including Borneo, Java and Sumatra; Kala (Golanagara), north of Thatôn, was then an important sea harbour, and according to Abuzaid and Kazwini, an Indian town, subject at that time (ninth century) to the king of Camboja. The country of the Talaings was then, no doubt, also a dependency of the same kingdom, and the silence of their records during that period is fully explained thereby. They mention, however, the struggle for ascendancy between Brahmanism and Buddhism; the latter prevailed chiefly because the maritime provinces of Burma became a place of refuge to a great number of Buddhist fugitives from India."—*Jardine Prize Essay*, p. 25.

Mr. Taw Sein Ko states the case differently, and seems to assume that the dominant religion of Cambodia was Buddhism rather than Brahmanism during the same period and earlier: "Judging by the splendid ruins of Cambodia, and the numerous Sanskrit inscriptions found there, it seems to be highly probable that that kingdom was the chief radiating centre of Buddhism in Indo-China, and that the expansion of its power to Thatôn and Malaya was accompanied by the spread of Buddhist influences. Cambodian supremacy in the Salween valley lasted till the eleventh century; and Cambodian influences in the valleys of the Salween and Irrawaddy ceased with the foundation of the kingdom of Siam in 1350 A.D." See *Burmese Sketches*, p. 180.



From these references to the temples of Cambodia, it is manifest that Buddhism was in a flourishing condition there at an early time. This is all that we need to know for our present purpose. There is another little fact that we should not forget: Even before there were any Indian Buddhist settlements in Cambodia, the Shans had come into possession of the regions adjacent to Cambodia on the north. This is not all (unless Mr. Hallett is mistaken in his facts). He says: "For about a hundred years after the conquest of the northern half of Cambodia, or Tchen-la, by the Yon Shans in 707, the lower half was under the dominion of the Siamese, but at a period between 806 and 820 they became again re-united." What this learned writer means here by "Siamese" is not quite clear. Lower Siam appears then to have been occupied by the Mons, the Khmers and the Talains not having yet been separated by Lao intrusion. In any case, it shows that the Shans and the then Buddhist Cambodians had overlapped. Under such conditions, that Buddhism with its temples, pagodas, monastic order, and literature, would make a mighty appeal to the then animistic and bookless Shans is one of the most natural, we may say inevitable, things in the world. From that day Buddhism most certainly spread among the Shans to the north and the north-east, whether it had done so before or not. If, thereafter, Pâli Buddhism spread with one-half the speed among the Shans that it did among the Burmans, under similar conditions, all the Shans of south-western Yünnan (the Cambodia River kingdom) were converted to Buddhism by the beginning of the tenth century, if not earlier.

There is something else to be considered here: What were the lusty Shans of north-western Siam and the coy Talains of Lower Burma doing during this period? Geographically their huts were in adjacent gardens. In such cases there is always neighbourliness of one kind and another, with intermingling and borrowing. Among other things which the Shan master borrowed of his Talain mistress was Buddhism, and with it a form of the Pâli alphabet.

In this connection, Dr. Dodd writes: "I know certainly that the Lao histories state, with considerable reiteration,

that Buddhism was introduced here (in Chieng-mai) from Burma in the Burmese Pâli form." Lao letters show that it was the Lower Burma or Talain form.

This we know, not only from older forms of the Lao alphabet, but from the alphabet they now use. But when? This is the only question that I need attempt to answer. All the Shans of northern Siam and of south-western Yünnan now have alphabets that came mainly from the Talain. The Talain form of the alphabet must therefore have been adopted before the Cambodian became prevalent and fixed. Slight remaining traces of the Cambodian is not proof to the contrary. Some may say that this is only another of my "inferences." Quite so; but when we are walking through mud we safely infer that it has rained. When we hear a bird warbling his plaintive song, we do not have to see him to know that he is a-tilt on the branch of a tree, or elsewhere, in the neighbourhood. This puts the date back before the beginning of the tenth century, and it may have been much earlier for all that we now know to the contrary. This "inference" is further supported by the existence of a Lao manuscript (now in the hands of a Presbyterian missionary of northern Siam) that was written in the thirteenth century, in essentially the same elaborate alphabet, with its complete tonal indications, now in use. This missionary (Dr. Dodd of Chieng-mai) says: "I have in my possession Lao palm-leaf writing, which differs in no essential from the present-day script, which gives the date of its writing as earlier than A.D. 1300." Such alphabets are not "invented" outright at any one time. They are developments, processes which require not only decades but often centuries for their perfecting.\*

Ney Elias says: "It is true that Buddhism is related to

\* No alphabet is perfect, and so it is the more surprising that the letters of the semi-civilized Laos are about as near perfection as any alphabet extant. The English alphabet with single consonants representing various sounds, and with various sounds represented by single consonants, and with vowel symbols carrying nearly half a score of different sounds on their backs, is not worthy of comparison with it. English spelling in its present condition is beneath contempt. This is the more astonishing when we remember that the races who use it are the most ingenious and enterprising on the globe.

have been introduced at the comparatively early period of the seventh century, in 639 according to Crawford (Vol. II, p. 92), during the reign of a chief or king named Krek who in honour of the event instituted the popular era three years thereafter, or in 642 A.D." That may be; but "Krek" was a Cambodian chief, and the era was a Cambodian era. In an article reprinted from the Chinese Repository, a king of Siam states: "Our ancient capital Ayuthia, before the year A.D. 1350, was but the ruin of an ancient place belonging to Kambuja (now known as Cambodia), formerly called Lawek, whose inhabitants then possessed Southern Siam or Western Kambuja."\* All this shows that the Shans might have got an alphabet at an early date from the Cambodians. In fact, we know that the Shans used an alphabet largely, if not wholly, Cambodian, in their rock-cut inscriptions of the thirteenth century (see an article by Dr. C. B. Bradley, *Journal of the Siam Society*, May 1913). This however was not the antecedent of the present Shan alphabets. That alphabet came largely from the Sanskrit, not from the Pâli, and to it only the Siamese alphabet can now, to any very large extent, be traced.

It seems far more likely that the Laos (Shans) got their alphabet and their Buddhism from the Talains before the former became dominant to the southward in Ayuthia, and that there was an infiltration from the Buddhism of the Mons of Cambodia and of their immediate neighbourhood after the intrusion of the Laos into that region. A few Shans may have lived roundabout old Ayuthia, but the Siamese writers themselves acknowledge that the Cambodians were dominant there until the middle of the fourteenth century. Ney Elias continuing says: "Bowring (I, p. 36) believes that Buddhism did not reach the Siamese direct from India or Ceylon, but through Cambodia, where it had already been established by Phra Buddha Goosa as early as the year of religion 965 or 422 A.D." This may all be, so far as the present form of the Buddhism of the Siamese is concerned, but it throws little light on the adoption

\* Bowring, *Kingdom and People of Siam*, Vol. II, p. 341.

of an alphabet and of Buddhism by the Laos (Shans) of northern Siam. Bowring himself says (on that same page 36): "It was in the one-thousandth year of Buddha, A.D. 457, that King Ruang . . . introduced the Thai (Siamese) alphabet." There were no "Siamese" then, in the modern sense. King Ruang was a Lao, and presumably the founder of Chieng-mai. If he introduced an alphabet at that time, he got it from the Talains. Otherwise we are compelled to grant that two alphabets were introduced, for the present one is essentially Talain. The date given is legendary and not dependable. That precise date, "the one-thousandth year of Buddha" gives it away. It is certainly too early, and probably too early by several centuries. Let us turn now, for a little evidence, to another quarter.

Fortunately there is an item in the history of Burma which (if reliable) may help us a little. "Anawrata, prompted no less by ambition than by religious zeal, not satisfied with the relic which he had obtained in Thatôn, desired to possess the holy tooth said to be preserved in China. He marched with an army, as an escort of honour, to that country, or to a province of it called Gandalarit. That name . . . is in the Burmese chronicle applied to a part of Yünnan (a Shan record says that he went to Möng-wong,\* which might be any province of China). The emperor (*sic*) at first took no notice of the king. At length they had a friendly meeting. Anawrata failed to get the relic he sought, but brought away a golden image which had been sanctified by direct contact with the holy tooth." †

\* The Shans in referring to Chinese rulers sometimes use the name Wu Ti Hpa, and at other times use the name Sao Wong, or Wong-ti. Both seem to be applied indiscriminately to either the emperor or to governors of provinces. Mr. Taw Sein Ko writes: "This form *Sao Wong* is interesting as it indicates the historic contact of the Shans with the Chinese of Kuantung or Canton Province. Wang, in the Mandarin and Yünnanese dialects, means a Prince or King. The word is pronounced Wong in Cantonese. So the meaning of "Sao Wong" is "His Majesty the King". . . . This philological relationship confirms your theory that the habitat of the Shans includes Yünnan, Kuantung and other provinces of China."

† Phayre, p. 35.

Dr. J. N. Cushing, regarded in his day as the first authority on the Shans, claimed that the solidarity of the Shan language, its freedom from widely different dialects, was indicative of racial unity and of close

Mr. Cocks says: "The ruler of Nan-chao, an independent Tai (Shan) kingdom in southern Yünnan, met the king, and presented him with a golden image which had touched the sacred tooth. With this he had to be content. On his return journey, Anawrata met and married a Shan princess." This was "Lady Mon-hla," the beautiful daughter of a Mao chief. Whether she was prized as highly as the tooth would have been or not is not stated. But she was not all he got. He got also that "golden image" (of Gautama). Whether it had or had not touched the holy tooth, which, it is alleged, was in Fuchau, a seaport in Fuhkien province, is immaterial. If the story is fact rather than fiction, there was Buddhism in "Southern Yünnan" at that time. It was unquestionably southern Buddhism. That an independent Tai chief of southern Yünnan had a golden image which had touched the holy tooth in Fuchau, or that he would have been willing to part with it if he had, draws heavily on my credulousnesses. The patient looks sick. But since Phayre and Cocks and a Hsenwi chronicle have "demonstrated over the claim" and have declared that the patient never even pretended to be sick, he may be taken as evidence. Truthfulness and candour are indispensable traits in an historian, and both of them compel me to

political relations over a considerable period of time. It is refreshing to see that Major Davies makes a similar statement (*Yünnan*, p. 334). He says: "The Nan-chao empire affords a most striking testimony to the influence that a large kingdom with a settled government has on abolishing dialects and establishing a standard form of speech. . . . From the sources of the Irrawaddy down to the Siamese border, and from Assam to Tongking, a region measuring 600 miles each way and including the whole of the former Nan-chao empire, the language is practically the same. Dialects of course exist, as they do in every country of the world, but a Shan born anywhere within these bounds will find himself able to carry on a conversation in parts of the country he has never heard of, hundreds of miles from his home. And this it must be remembered is more than six hundred years after the fall of the Nan-chao dynasty, and among Shans who have had no recent political or commercial relations with each other."

The early spread of Buddhism and the reduction of the language to written form unquestionably had an even greater unifying and conserving influence. The comparative absence of widely different dialects is certainly due as much to the introduction of writing as to political control, a fact of very considerable importance which both of these authorities seem to have lost sight of. If the Shans had an earlier literature of northern Buddhism, which has perished, that also helped.

say that I think that the whole tale is tommy-rot. I am not quite sure as to what tommy-rot means, but it is some old truck that is the worse for age. Now, the conclusion of the whole matter.

It is seldom wise to be too sure of things that one is not sure of ; but putting the scraps of evidence together, such as they are, the probability that a large number of Shans, over a wide area, had adopted Buddhism, and with it an alphabet, before the beginning of the tenth century must be admitted. The Buddhist religion and a Buddhist literature advanced hand in hand. The literature was the vehicle in which the religion was carried. In speaking of the coming of the southern princes into the Mao kingdom to take over the rule of the country and give the weary elders a rest, the statement was made that "they brought writings with them." That event is said to have taken place about the middle of the tenth century. We now see that the statement is not historically improbable. Ney Elias says that the Mao Shans took writings with them to Assam, when they conquered that country in the early part of the thirteenth century ; that also is possible. And it was all a literature of the Cambodia River Shans ; that we know from the literature itself. We do not really know much about it, but all that we do know points to this period as the time when knowledge of writing, as we now find it, and of southern Buddhism, first came to the Shans of eastern Burma. I have gone a long way to get back to this point, but the world is round and funny and a long-winded man always gets there, if he keeps straight ahead and goes far enough. Whether the Shans were, or were not, converted to northern Buddhism, which later perished, will soon be considered.





SHAN COOLIE BASKETS.



## SHAN RELIGION (MYTHOLOGICAL).

THE primitive religions of all races, in all places and at all times, have been much alike, in so far as they are known. They have been quite naturally so, for all races have had about them the same world of mystery, and in them the same passions, the same loves and hates, the same hopes and fears. Mythology is a vine which, with much manuring and pruning, has borne some of the finest fruit of religion, clusters as large and luscious as the grapes of Eshcol. For this reason mythology is worthy of study in all its forms.

What we may call, for want of a better name, the Shan mythology of to-day came from two sources: first, from their own ancient myths handed down from unknown generations and having in general the quality of the Shamanism of the Mongols and Tartars, with its propitiation of evil spirits, sorcery, and much else of a similar character, and, secondly, from myths borrowed from their neighbours. These latter are largely of Aryan derivation and, being of Aryan derivation, resemble in many ways the myths of the ancient Greeks and Romans.

What the Shans of olden times conceived to be the shape and characteristics of the earth on which they dwelt, we have now no means of knowing. Their present cosmological fancies, largely of Aryan origin, came from northern India. Mt. Mero takes the place of Mt. Olympus as the abode of the superior gods, and the earth, inhabited by the human race, is the southern of a group of four surrounding islands. Round them all flows the River-ocean. Mt. Mero rests on the back of a tusked elephant; the elephant on a coiled serpent; the serpent on an enormous crab; the crab on a sea; and the sea on air, or on nothing at all. The Northern

Island also is inhabited, but the inhabitants differ somewhat from the Hyperboreans of the Greeks. Aryan mythology, passing through Buddhistic channels, is too gloomy to give the Shans the Elysian Plain, the Isles of the Blessed, though Chinese Buddhism of the Northern Canon has its "Paradise of the West"; yet in the local traditional animism there still lingers a spirit-land beyond the "River of Death" where the boatman continues to draw a steady income. No tickets are issued and the toll varies from a pice to a rupee, slipped into the mouth of the dead. This is the obolos of the Greeks.

The sun, the moon, and the stars were, and are still among the Shans, the golden palaces of the gods, or spirit-kings and spirit-queens of apotheosized heroes and heroines of their own race. The sun-god (Suriya) and the moon-god (Santa) drive their glittering chariots round Mt. Mero and, from creation, were charged by the sky-god, Lord Ing (Indra), to keep out of each other's way. Adoration of the sun, moon and stars enters, quite naturally, into the worship of nearly all primitive peoples. The Quichuas of Peru, perhaps the most remarkable of American Indians, worshipped a Supreme God, Pachacamac, represented by a gilded stone statue, and by a polished gold plate, probably used to reflect the sun, and the sun may have been regarded as an emblem of the God himself.\*

The old Ahom (Shan) cosmogony, from the Ahom writings, is too long to insert here, but the gist of it may be given. Before doing so, it may be well to give the first part of a cosmogony from north India, and another from the Scandinavian literature, for comparison. The north Indian cosmogony, as retranslated by Dr. Martin from a French translation, runs in part as follows: "In the beginning there was nothing: all was emptiness, and the five elements had no existence. Then the Adi-Buddha revealed himself under the form of a flame of light. He is the great Buddha who exists for himself. All things in the three worlds have their cause in him; he it is who sustains their being. From him,

\* *Masterpieces and History of Literature*, p. 386.

and out of his profound meditation, the universe has sprung into life." \*

We may now give a few lines from the Ahom cosmogony. By substituting in it "Adi-Buddha" for "Lord Ing" (Indra), we see at once how strikingly alike they are. There can be no doubt as to the source from which at least this part of the Shan cosmogony came:

" In the beginning under heaven not yet was there anything ;  
 Not yet were the worlds spread out below ;  
 Nor had any one fashioned them ;  
 The surrounding waters only were.  
 Nor yet were there the so-called mansions above ;  
 For no one had established the over-arching sky.  
 All was chaos and emptiness.  
 Then there was beginning of neither Day nor Night ;  
 For no one above shone with light to brighten the sky ;  
 And the two thrones, Day and Night, were vacant.  
 The winds blew and there was a great storm,  
 Into which the God, Lord Ing (Indra), entered.  
 Then the God living dwelt in the sky ;  
 Living he dwelt in the midst of the sky alone.  
 Though he had a mouth to speak,†  
 In the beginning he knew not anything.  
 Thereafter, opening his eyes, he saw the world of glooms ; ‡  
 For of all things beneath the sky there was nothing (then) ;  
 The mansions of the sky about the world existed not ;  
 Neither were there spirits, male or female, nor men.

\* *Lore of Cathay*, p. 256.

In the Ahom cosmogony, *Sao-Ing* has the character of this Adi-Buddha. These Shans were therefore acquainted with the northern form of Buddhism. Whether they became acquainted with it before, or after, they entered Assam remains to be considered.

† Whether the Shan word "nyang" in the text is equivalent to "mi" meaning *to be* or *to possess*, or is equivalent to the negative "bao," cannot be determined without knowing the *tone*, which is impossible at this distance to get. As Lord Ing has already entered into the storm, and his eyes and belly are mentioned in the lines below, the affirmative sense is taken here ; but in the north Indian cosmogony, from which this is manifestly taken, Adi-Buddha does not appear to have had such a corporeal existence, which favours the negative sense. Whether the Shans got the cosmogony from the Chinese or direct from north India is immaterial.

‡ The idea that God sleeps seems to be common to hill races on the Cambodia, whence this came originally. That accomplished linguist, Mr. Ba Te, says, "The bliss of God is conceived by the *Lahus* as a peaceful sleep. 'God, he sleeps three years, three years does God sleep.'"

The God said : I dwell alone ; it is not good ;  
 For no one exists to speak of my glory.  
 Then the God, with bowed head, thought in his mind ;  
 In his heart (*lit.* belly), he meditated ;  
 In mind contemplating, brought he forth well-ordered words,  
 Like a bunch of flowers drooping from their stem."

The foregoing is like the north Indian cosmogony, but the following resembles more closely the Scandinavian, in which the Prophetess Volga says : " In early times, when Ymer lived, there was no sand, nor sea, nor cooling wave, nor earth was found, nor heaven above ; one chaos all, and nowhere grass. Until Bor's sons upraised the expanse, by whom Midgard the great was made. From the south the sun shone on the walls ; then did the earth green herbs produce.

" The sun turned south ; the moon shone ; her right hand held the horse of heaven. The sun knew not his proper sphere ; the stars knew not their proper places ; the moon knew not her proper power. Then all the powers went to the throne, the holy gods, and held council : they gave night and cock-crowing time their names, morning also, and noonday tide, and after noon, the years to tell." \*

To compare with this we may now have a little more from the Shan :

" Bright worlds came forth afar ;  
 As worlds, radiant, innumerable, came forth the gods.  
 The world-gods, every one, bowing down said :  
 We know not when the Day shall rise ;  
 Neither know we how that we shall dwell.  
 The Soverain God gave them their dwellings then."

The fancy here that the " words " which issued from the " mind " of the God became world-gods bowing before their Sovereign almost reminds one of the Hebrew conception that " the worlds have been framed by the word of God " (Hebrews, 11:3). The glorious world-words are now caused to assume their forms and mission : one became the world-crab resting on the waters ; another the coiled serpent resting on the crab ; a third the male elephant of shining tusks resting on the serpent ; on the latter rested a mighty

\* See *Masterpieces and History of Literature*.

mass of white rock, "the head of the world," which may mean simply "in the north." Others became mountains of crystal and diamond roundabout the sky. Then follows the "Royal Spider" fancy which has its counterpart in the myths of some of the American Indians of Arizona and New Mexico (U.S.A.) :

"One became a large male golden (royal) spider ;  
Whose excrement became the dust of the earth below.  
Back and forth went the spider spinning ;  
His web-form became the over-arching sky,  
Whose highest part was his throne.  
The web, interwoven, became thick and strong.  
Roundabout were the myriad island-worlds.  
Desolate were they as a forest silent of men.  
Mountains of ice and vapour were everywhere."

At the head of the "Chart of Chinese Ethics," there is a figure representing the "mundane egg," or mass of chaotic matter, containing *Yin* and *Yang*, the (active and passive) seminal principles from whose action and reaction all things are evolved (*Lore of Cathay*, p. 206). The earlier part of the Ahom cosmogony seems to have come from north Indian sources, directly or indirectly, but we come now to something which appears to have had some connection with this "mundane egg." This should please the scientific theorists, with their primordial protoplasm ; though they are late and can lay little claim to originality.\*

"Thereafter the God said : I know there are eggs.  
I know not whether a spirit, Brahma, or God caused them to be.†  
They hung in the sky like a honeycomb ;  
Suspended in the expanse like a swarm of bees.  
The spider weaving the over-arching sky,  
Formed a heaven about the golden yolks (eggs).  
The yolks of the gods came forth in splendor,  
Suspended, like bees under eaves, protected from the wind.  
The God caused to be pregnant the yolks,  
From which would come the rulers of the worlds."

\* Mr. Taw Sein Ko says that the Burmans and the Chins also say that mankind sprang from 101 eggs.

† I am not quite sure whether this confession of agnosticism should be attributed to Lord Ing or to the Shan writer.

The remainder of this somewhat long, but interesting, cosmogony may be briefly told. The God put the eggs, or "golden yolks," as they are sometimes called, on the top of Mt. Meru and commissioned the god of heat to brood over them. This the latter did for months and years together, but though the eggs rumbled on like the buzzing of bees and loud as the trumpeting of elephants, they would not hatch. They rumbled indeed till mountains might have shaken and fallen into the valleys below. There was a reason for this : the eggs had not been medicinally treated with *nam-pu-lawk*,\* a life-prolonging elixir. Search was made for it. It was found in a world of ice and snow, where the golden spider had been chilled and killed and remained immovable, a sad end for an architect that had wrought so well. He changed into two glorious things : his body became the substance of precious stones, and his blood became this *nam-pu-lawk*. It took four years to bring it in. A little was sprinkled on the eggs, and at once they hatched out the world-rulers—white as falling flakes of snow. These were sun-gods, and moon-gods, and gods of all nature-forces, as of light and air, of winds and the cloudy sky, of the shady forests and of the rippling streams. There were gods of spirits, of men, and even of dreams. The heat of the eggs became the god of fire, and even their shells were not wasted, for from them came a flock of primeval birds. As the sun-god is said to vary his course northward and then southward, there is some idea here of the ecliptic.

Lord Ing (Indra) has in this cosmogony his ancient Indian character of a Supreme God, though quite different from the Adi-Buddha, whose delight is to make happy all sentient creatures ; for Lord Ing, having appointed all the gods and the Tai (Shans) to their respective places, and instructed them in their duties, returned to the height of heaven and commanded them not to disturb him. He is an absentee God, with as little interest in his tenants as absentee lords are commonly supposed to have. This shows the influence of southern Buddhism on the northern Buddhist cosmogony.

\* Gautama is sometimes metaphorically called *Sao-nam-pu-lawk*, "the lord of life's elixir."

Lord Ing, among the Shans of Burma, has still further degenerated into the character of their old sky-god, "Ling-lawn." Like Jupiter, he has the thunder for his weapon, and, when provoked by the impiety or injustice of men, casts his thunderbolts with fatal fury. In Shan amorous songs love is sometimes personified and we read of his "arrow piercing the bosom to its feather," but more frequently it is this Lord Ing, *alias* Ling-lawn, who shoots the darts of desire not only into the heart of man and maid, but into the heart of naga and me-naga as well.

I wish now to give a Shan flood-myth, but before doing so it may not be out of place to say a word about Shan godlets and spirits in general. Shan gods or spirits are distinguished, with few exceptions, by class rather than by proper names. They have no Bellona, but they have gods of war to whom offerings are made before going into battle; there is no Pomona or Flora, but there are guardian spirits of the forests; there is no Pales, but there are spirits of the fields and of the herds to whom the resounding bells on the backs of transport bullocks ring out a sort of propitiatory prayer; there are no Penates, but offerings of fruit are made to spirits of the home at every house-raising, and good and bad spirits keep watch and ward on either side of a child's cradle. The Greek and the Roman names too indicate that they may at the first have been class, rather than individual, appellations. With this parenthetical remark, we are nice and ready for our flood-myth.

The Shans, like the Romans, tell of a golden age before the flood, an age of innocence and happiness, where truth and right prevailed among men, the direct descendants of the gods. Long separated from heaven, they became impious and unjust. In Roman mythology we read that after the age of innocence and perpetual spring, "crime burst in like a flood; modesty, truth, and honour fled." Then Jupiter, though a sensuous and cruel monarch and no better than he ought to be, burned with anger and summoned a council of the gods. He seized his thunderbolt and would have cast it forth to destroy the world by burning had not better counsel prevailed. Inspired with a lofty sense of self-preservation,

the gods argued that heaven too might be consumed in the mighty conflagration. In committee of the whole, the resolution, without riders, was quickly passed to drown the world instead.

With this the Shan flood-myth may be compared. It is too long to give in full. We must be satisfied with general remarks and a few brief selections. In passing it may be well to say that the Hebrews had by no means a monopoly of legends of a flood. The half-civilized Shans and the wild hill tribes of Indo-China had theirs as well. They may not be so sacred or so sensible, but even in their whimsical capriciousness they are readable and not without a certain fascination.

The myth here to be given is from the Ahoms (Shans) of Assam, but the Shans of the Cambodia River regions have a similar tradition; and the Lahu and other hill tribes have theirs. They are all so much alike as to suggest a common origin, and yet there are differences in detail. In this myth, for instance, a seed of a gourd plant is found in the paunch of a cow and, planted, bears fruit. From one of the enormous gourds thus produced, broken open by a thunderbolt, the progenitors of the present Shan race emerge to rule their portion of the earth. The cow, by the way, was saved from the great flood on a raft made by the only man to whom the coming of the flood had been revealed by the gods.

In another version of the legend, seven men and seven women, better than their neighbours, crawled into the dry shell of a mammoth gourd which floated on the water. After many days of bobbing on the waves, the gourd-boat rested on the top of a mountain and the seven couples came forth nice and dry. The world still owes them a debt of gratitude, for they were fruitful and multiplied and replenished the earth. They who have had dealings with their progeny sometimes think that it is a pity the gourd-boat did not spring a-leak.

Naturally the names of the sky-gods and of the peoples, if mentioned, differ in the various localities, according to the notions and language of each. Though this legend in its present form comes from Assam, where the Shans have been



long under Hindu influence, it shows only slightly the thumb-prints of Hindu myths. The palace of Ling-lawn and the counsellors are Shan; the fire-god, though not mentioned elsewhere, is not necessarily a touch of Hinduism. The Chinese had their fire-god, and the Shans may have had theirs. The cow on the raft has a Hindu squint. The Shans of eastern Burma have been so long under Burman Buddhistic influence that this legend is by them ignored or forgotten, with the exception of the Shans of Kengtung. That it is a Cambodia River product is certain, for the old Shan kingdom down there (Möng-hi Möng-ham or Möng-ri Möng-ram) is expressly mentioned. Now a few lines from the story:

“ Long long ago there were many worlds beneath the sky ;  
But in the world of men, the middle-world, ,  
There was no race of kings (the Shans).  
The earth was like a wild mountainous jungle.  
On a time, bamboos cracking open animals produced.  
They lived in deep forests far from the haunts of men.  
Thereafter, a king and a queen from heaven, Hpi-pok and  
Hpi-mot,  
Came down to earth, and their way found to Möng-hi  
On the Cambodia River's banks.  
The forebears were they of the kingly race of Shans.  
The time came when no sacrificial offerings made they  
To their gods.”

The storm-god, Ling-lawn, was so displeased at their impiety that he sent down great cranes to eat them. The obedient cranes came, but could not eat up all the people, they were so many.

Then the storm-god sent down great tawny lions, and they too found more Shans than they could devour. Ling-lawn was resourceful and persistent and now sends down great serpents to swallow the whole impious race; but all the people from palace to hamlet, from the oldest to the youngest, attacked the serpents with their swords and killed them. The storm-god was enraged, breathed threateningly, and the battle was not over.

The old year passed and from the first to the third month of the new year (about December—February), the year

Tao-hsi-nga,\* when there was a great drought. In the fourth month (March, well on in the dry season) the parched earth cracked open in wide seams and many people died from thirst and famine. In whatever country they were, there they must stay. There was no water and they could not pass from one country to another. The water dried up in the deepest ponds and in the largest rivers; where elephants had bathed, the people now dug wells for drinking water. What had been their watering places, where many people had gathered together like swarms of bees in their search for water, now stank with the bodies of the dead.

“ Then Ling-lawn, the storm-god, called his counsellors :  
 Kaw-hpa and Hseng-kio, old Lao-hki, Tai-long and Bak-long,  
 And Ya-hseng-hpa, the smooth talker (and many others).  
 At his court gathered they together.  
 Entering his palace bowed they down in worship.  
 Over the head of the god was an umbrella, widely spread and  
 beautiful as a flower.  
 They talked together in the language of men (Shan)  
 And the human race to destroy, took counsel together.  
 Let us send for Hkang-hkak, said they ;  
 He was the god of streams and of ponds,  
 Of crocodiles and of all water animals.  
 Majestically came he in, and the storm-god  
 Gave him instructions saying,  
 Descend with the clouds. Tarry not.  
 Straightway report to Lip-long, the distinguished lord.”

There is some confusion here. Ya-hseng-hpa (heavenly-jewel-lady) may mean either queen or queen-mother. Tai-long certainly, and Bak-long probably, was the name of an ancient Shan king; Ling-lawn, the All-Nourisher, was a title sometimes applied to the king of Nan-chao; and Lao-hki may have been his Chinese adviser. Earthly names appear to be transferred to a court of heaven. Otherwise we must assume that an ancient Nan-chao king sent the flood, an assumption that even the Shans could hardly have adopted. We may go on now with the story. Soon thereafter Hkang-hkak appeared before the sage, Lip-long, who had been

\* The nineteenth year of an unnamed cycle. This is or was the Shan way of marking time, and has led to much confusion, as there is no way in which to determine which cycle was intended.

consulting his chicken bones. The omens were inauspicious. When he came down from his house the sky was dry as an oven. He knew that some great evil was impending. He was not therefore surprised on meeting Hkang-hkak to hear him say that Ling-lawn was about to send a flood to overwhelm the earth. The messenger declared that the people of every land would be destroyed; that trees would be uprooted and houses submerged or float bottom up on the water. Even great cities would be overwhelmed. None could escape. Every living thing would be drowned. The sage was commanded to make, before the flood came, a strong raft, binding it firmly together with ropes. He was to take a cow on the raft. Though all things else were destroyed, they would escape. He was not permitted to warn even his affectionate wife and dear children of the coming destruction.

“ Considering Hkang-hkak’s sad instructions, Lip-long Homeward went with bowed head and in deep dejection. His little son caught he up in his arms and wept aloud. His oldest son longed he to tell, but feared The cruel vengeance of the gods. Unable to eat from sorrow of heart, in the morning Went he down hungry and stooping to the river’s bank. There toiled he day by day, gathering of his raft The parts and firmly binding them side by side. Even his own wife and children laughed and jeered At his finished but futile task. From house to house the scoffers mocked and railed : Quit it, thou fool, an ass, they cried. If this come to the ear of governors Out of the way will they put thee ; If to the ear of the king, he will command thy death. Over the great kingdoms then reigned Hkun Chao and Hkun Chu.”

It is peculiar, and not without significance, that the “Chao” here is the same as in Nan-chao, and the “Chu” \* is the same word as “Ts’u,” the name of the southern confederate state of China, so often mentioned in an earlier chapter.

\* The initial consonant in these names is represented by a single consonant in the Shan, and the names are pronounced *Tsao* and *Tsu* by the Shans of Burma; *Chao* and *Chu* by the Shans elsewhere.

A few days later the flood came sweeping on and increasing in violence like the onward rush of a forest fire. Fowls died in their coops. The crying of children was silenced in death. The bellowing of bulls and the trumpeting of elephants ceased as they sank. There was confusion and destruction on every side. All animals were swept away, and the race of men perished. There was no one left in the valleys or on the mountains. The strong raft, with Lip-long and the cow, alone floated safe upon the water. As he drifted on, he saw the dead bodies of his wife and children. He caught and embraced them and let them fall back again into the water. As he cast them from him into the deep he wept bitterly, bitterly lamenting that the storm-god did not permit him to warn them of the impending doom. Thus perished the kingly race (the Shans). Paying their ferry-hire (how they could do it is not evident), their spirits passed over to the mansions of heaven. There they heard the reverberations of the celestial drums. They came by tens of thousands and eating cold crab they were refreshed. Reaching the spirit-world they looked round and said, "Spirit-land is as festive and charming as a city of wine (nam-lao) and women."

The stench of dead bodies, glistening in the sun, filled the earth. Ling-lawn sent down innumerable serpents to devour them, but they could not, there were so many. The angry god would have put them to death, but they escaped by fleeing into a cave. Then he sent down a large number of tigers, "nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand" to be exact. They could not make much headway and went off. The god, more angry than ever, cast at the retreating tigers showers of thunderbolts, but they too fled into caves with such fierce growls that the very sky might have fallen. Then he sent down Hsen-htam (who he was is not clear) and Hpa-hpai, the god of fire. As they descended, riding their horses, they viewed all the country over. Alighting on a mountain, they could see only three elevations of land. They sent forth a great conflagration scattering their fire everywhere. The fire swept over all the earth, and the smoke ascended in clouds to heaven.

Lip-long, seeing the fire coming, caught up a stick and knocked down the cow with a single blow (thus passes the squint of Hinduism). With his sword he ripped open her belly and crawled in. There he saw seed of the gourd plant, white as leavened bread. The fire swept over the dead cow, roaring as it went. When it was gone, Lip-long came forth, the only living man beneath the sun. Asking the great celestial, Hkang-hkak, for advice, the latter told him to plant the seed on a level plot of land. One vine climbed up a mountain and was scorched by the fierce rays of the sun. Another vine ran downward and, overflowed with water, rotted and died. Another, springing upwards with clinging tendrils, twined itself about the bushes and trees. News of its rapid growth reached the ears of Ling-lawn. He sent down his gardener to care for it. The gardener, coming in haste, arrived in the early morning at cock-crowing time. He dug about and manured the vine. He trailed up its branches with his own hand. When the rainy season came, the vine grew by leaps and bounds. It spread far and wide, coiling itself like a serpent about the shrubs and trees. It blossomed and bore fruit, great gourds such as no man may see again.

Then Ling-lawn (the god of rain) sent down Sao-pang (the god of the clear sky) to prepare the earth for human habitation. From him came forth heat waves to dry up what was left of the flood; so the fire seems not to have made clean work. When the earth was dry once more and fit for habitation, the storm-god cast thunderbolts to break the gourds in pieces. A bolt struck and broke open a gourd. The people within cried out: "What is this? a bolt from a clear sky; let us go forth to till the land." Stooping low they came forth. Again, another bolt struck another gourd breaking it open, and the Shans therein said, "What shall we do, lord?" and he replied, "You shall come forth to rule many lands." Thus the thunderbolts struck gourd after gourd, and from them came rivers of water, tame and wild animals, domestic fowls and birds of the air, and every useful plant—filling the earth again with life in all its varied forms.

" Then came forth Sao-pang, who lives in the elements  
 Of man's body and said, ' I die for you :  
 Yearly offer to me sacrifices of your bulls and buffaloes,  
 That I may partake of their swcet savour in the sky,  
 This command let no man transgress.'  
 When speaking, a bolt struck, and of him a part  
 A spirit living among the gods became ;  
 A part became a spirit living in the forests ;  
 Other parts became spirits of ponds and rivers,  
 And of fields and gardens which the hands of man till.\*  
 His right eye became the sun, the lord of day ;  
 His left eye became the moon, the lord of night.  
 His tongue was shattered and became fire,  
 The stars which are lanterns of the gods,  
 Shining by night upon the world of men.  
 His nose broken became silver and gold in the earth.  
 From him also came tens of thousands of Shans  
 And of subject races, the Hill Tribes.†  
 Through his self-sacrifice, the Shans  
 Find food in the water and gather the fruit of the land.  
 The Shans and the Las, the hill tribes, quarrelled ;  
 The wild men fled to the mountains  
 The highland fields to till ;  
 The Shans settled in the valleys to till  
 The lowland fields."

At least, in a general way, the subject of transmigration, metamorphosis, metempsychosis, or whatever name may best describe the change from one existence to another, may very suitably come under the mythology of the Shans, rather than under their Buddhism. The subject is in its nature mythological and was pre-Buddhistic in India, and westward ; but unfortunately there is little evidence that the Shans themselves believed in transmigration in pre-Buddhistic times or at any time before they became Buddhists. In earlier times the Shans almost certainly worshipped the spirits of their ancestors, as the Chinese do, with whom also transmigration is an imported doctrine.

\* The Shans seem to have held that the gods, as well as men, had three or more souls or spirits. The same view is still held by some of the hill races along the Cambodia River. The Chinese and American Indians have the same idea. The origin of such a conception doubtless goes very far back and may be now unsearchable.

† There seems to be here a mingling of two flood-myths, for the people who were first said to have come from the gourd later are said to have come through the sacrifice of Sao-pang.

My reason for inserting the subject here is twofold, the nature of the subject itself as mythological, and convenience; for when I come to speak of Buddhism in the next section I shall have more material without it than I can cram into reasonable limits.

If my learned reader wishes to think of transmigration wholly within the terms of Buddhism, he can do so, whether the subject is treated here or further on. I refrain from saying that transmigration was an element in the indigenous religion of the Shans. I think it is largely if not wholly post-Buddhistic. Convenience and the nature of the subject are my only reasons for treating it here. As a matter of fact Shan mythology and Shan Buddhism overlap, and no Shan himself can tell where the one begins and where the other leaves off.\*

In the Western myths of human beings changed into rocks, fountains, flowering-plants, fishes, and four-footed beasts, at the caprice of the gods, we see but a degenerate form of what is now the Eastern conception of transmigration according to a fixed, unalterable and unavoidable law. Glaucus, the fisherman, eating peculiar herbs, is changed into a fish and, forming an attachment for Scylla, who

\* Among some of the Karens, Kachins, and other spirit-worshippers, traces of a belief in transmigration are found, but they may have come from neighbouring Buddhism. That unwashed and uncombed Karens or Kachins, or other of these hill peoples, believe in transmigration is doubtful; except in a rudimentary form. Mr. Ba Te states that, according to the *Lahus*, God, under certain conditions, sends down his healing angels with this message:

“God wills not that thou shouldst go  
Under water and be a fish;  
He wills thee not to become a bird  
That flutters her wings;  
He wills not that thou shouldst become  
A beast that roams the forest.”

This presupposes the possibility that it might happen.

Many of the Chinese may now believe in some form of transmigration through the influence of Buddhism, though ancestor-worship seems to preclude such ideas. That the ancient Chinese did not is evident from poems of the Han dynasty or earlier:

“And far away are pine-trees towering high,  
Beneath whose shade the graves of heroes lie;  
In Hades now their last long sleep they take,  
From which a mortal never more shall wake.”

See *Chinese Poems*, by Charles Rudd.

rejects his advances, appeals to Circe. The latter, spurned by Glaucus, turns her jealous wrath against her rival, Scylla, and—*presto!*—she becomes a rock. Dryope plucks a flower at the water's rim and, lo, blood issues instead of juice from the broken stem. She learns too late that the flower is the nymph Lotis changed into this form to escape her base pursuer. She herself, stricken with sorrow and fear, would rush away, but finds her feet growing like roots into the ground; her body changing rapidly into the trunk of a tree; her arms into branches; and her hair into foliage. Only a moment has she to bid farewell to her dearest friends and to ask them to lift up her babe once more so that she may kiss him before the completion of the metamorphosis. Apollo's discus thrown strikes the earth and bounces, hitting Hyacinthus in the head. Dying his blood sinks into the earth and stains the herbage. It is no longer blood, but a beautiful blood-red flower called after his name, the hyacinth. Thus these tales ramble on and are by no means an improvement on the older Oriental myths of transmigration.

Of the latter, the five hundred and fifty birth stories of Gautama, the Buddha, are the most widely read and the best known. We may assume that they existed long before Gautama's day, though now they have clustered about his magnetic name. It would take a much larger book than this to give an adequate account of all these stories. Here only the slightest reference can be made to them. In his many alleged existences, Gautama had the good fortune to be a man nearly one-half of the time. In these existences, he was a teacher, ascetic, priest, savage, counsellor, prince, merchant, rich man, potter, scavenger, king, carpenter, thief, nobleman, elephant-trainer, farmer, beggar, and practiser of feats of agility or athlete. As a four-footed beast, he was a deer, monkey, dog, horse, bull, elephant, buffalo, hare, jackal, varanus, lion, rat, frog and hog, and perhaps some others. As a bird with two feet, he was a drake, quail, partridge, dove, peacock, parrot, jungle-cock, goose, galon, vulture, and many others. At least once he was a fish with no feet at all. As a spirit, he



was a brahma of the upper spirit heavens, a deva of the lower spirit heavens, the guardian spirit of the ocean, the guardian spirit of the air, and the guardian spirit of the forests with special appetite for the rose-tree and the thorn-bush. The changes were often swift and extreme. If there was evolution with the survival of the fittest, there was also devolution and more than arrested development. From a ruddy goose on the banks of the Ganges, he wends his way upward to an ascetic, to the son of a king, and to Indra as the ruler of the devas of the lower spirit heavens ; and, again, from Indra he runs swiftly down to a bird in the Himalayan forests, to the spirit-guardian of a tree, and to a thief. But, after all, it is by a fixed law of merit and demerit, and is better than falling under the fury of Jupiter or running against the jealousy of Juno.

The later Romans, it is true, had different views of metempsychosis, based on merit and more consonant with the transmigration of the Far East. According to Virgil, Anchises, in Elysium, explained to his visiting son, Æneas, how that only the pure were permitted to remain in the under-world of the blest. Some, whose impurities had been purged away, were sent back endowed with human life and human bodies, but the more wicked, whose impurities could not be washed away entirely with Elysian soap, were made over into tigers, cats, monkeys, and the like. This does not correspond exactly with the transmigration of the East, for we see the fine hand of the gods at work instead of a fixed impersonal law.

The view which Pythagoras seems to have had comes the nearest perhaps of any. He is said to have asserted that he had a distinct recollection of having passed through other stages of existence; and once, we are told, that on seeing a dog beaten and hearing him howl, he asked the strikers to stop, saying, "it is the soul of a friend of mine, whom I recognize by his voice." As he was not ashamed to confess to the kind of company he had kept, the statement carries with it an accent of conviction.

The doctrine of transmigration is taken very seriously by the Shans, as it is by other Eastern races. Many little

tales are told in proof of its reality. There is a bird in the forests whose plaintive notes sound like the Shan words for "Father, father, O father," and the tale is told that a most unfatherly father once took his little son into a deep forest and left him there. The child wandered about crying bitterly, "Father, father, O father," till exhausted by hunger, weariness, and fright. In his next life he became the bird whose plaintive notes are still heard. In north Hsenwi, a few years ago, two men were quarrelling and one of them cursed the other, saying "May you die and in your next life become a bull-calf without a tail." Soon thereafter the man died, and within the year a bull-calf was born in the neighbourhood without a tail. Certainly it was a case of transmigration, and that tail-less calf was the incontestable proof of the fulfilment of the imprecation. Tales like these are common and might be gathered almost without number. No one need marvel that many, with such a belief, like Pythagoras, have heard the voice of a friend in the barking of a dog or in the mewing of a cat.

Because of a consciousness of sin and of a certain sense of demerit, the doctrine often fails to give much consolation. The wish to become a man again in the next existence is far stronger than the expectation that it will be so. If even Gautama became a hog grunting in his pen and a frog croaking in his pond, how small is the hope that ordinary mortals will attain a higher station in the life to come. The look ahead is not however always gloomy. The way the doctrine works out in the thought and life of the people may be seen in the pretty tale soon to be told.

In all the myths of the West none shows more beautifully the faithful devotion and constancy of true love than the story of Pyramus and Thisbe. The amorous tale is old and familiar, but we may have it here in brief again for comparison. They lived in adjoining houses, and companionship soon ripened into love. Their parents forbade them to marry, but there was a crack in the wall through which they could breathe sweet nothings and blow kisses. No true lovers, however ill-starred, could be satisfied with that. They planned to elope. On a night

when safe from watchful eyes, they would steal out to the tomb of Ninus; the first to arrive was to wait for the other. Thisbe, more eager than her lover, was number one. Sitting under a tree to wait, she espied a lioness with jaws dripping from recent slaughter. Like a sensible girl, she fled to a cave for safety, but dropped her veil and could not stop to pick it up. The lioness approaching rent her veil with her bloody jaws. Pyramus, coming soon after, saw the torn and bloody veil. With unutterable grief for the death which he had caused, as he supposed, he would prove his love and plunged his sword into his heart. Thisbe, anxious for the safety of her lover, crept cautiously forth and seeing what had taken place cried boldly, "My heart must be as brave and my love as strong as thine." Their blood mingled and sank into the earth at the roots of a mulberry tree, whose blood-stained berries are the living memorial of the constancy of their love.

Now let us compare with this the myth of Hsam-law and U-pim. The story was composed in metrical form by one who signs himself a disciple of the monk Kang-hsö who died some sixty years ago. The latter was one of the most prolific of all the Shan writers, and has nearly one hundred books (such as they are) to his credit. This amorous poem is at once the longest and the most popular of all the Shan love-tales. Hsam-law was the son of a so-called rich man of Möng-nawng (in the Southern Shan States). From childhood he was the pride and joy of his parents and the cynosure of the little eyes of the opposite sex. The little girls vied with one another in their attentions and each boasted that she would some day have him for a lover. When of marriageable age (sixteen or seventeen), his mother set her heart on his marrying the daughter of a neighbouring rich man, but since she was ugly in look and ungraceful in manner, the young<sup>m</sup>-man refused. In part to rid himself of his mother's importunities, and in part to see a little more of the narrow world in which he lived, and perhaps to earn a little spending money for himself, Hsam-law, calling his companions together, started with them on a long journey to the tea hills, a hundred miles

to the northward. His bullock caravan was laden with rice and other products of the locality to exchange for dry and wet tea. The Shans are lovers of nature in all her manifold forms, and there is a charming description of his home town with the rugged mountains, the undulating strath, the winding and rippling stream, the pastures blushing with wild flowers, and all gladdened with the happy songs of myriad birds. On the way, at their encampments, the company often met with bevvies of girls and there were the customary flirtations which came to nothing.

Hsam-law made a profitable exchange of his merchandise for dry and "pickled" tea, and at last reached Mōng-kōng on his return journey. Here lived U-pim, the beautiful, virtuous and industrious daughter of a man of rank and wealth. Love, ever busy with his arrows, sped one into her heart without her being aware of what had hit her and given the sweet pain. In some way, she knew not why, her slender fingers wearied of the silken patterns she was weaving, and she found herself dallying over her mirror, more anxious than ever of the tidiness of her apparel and the combing of her hair. It was market-day, but why she should want to go, where she had been scores of times before, she could not tell, for surely the servants could buy, as well as she, all the necessities and dainties for herself or for the family. But she went, tarrying here and there, with her little heart going pit-a-pat, to look over and finger many articles for which she had neither use nor care.

Another arrow struck Hsam-law in the same tender spot. Never before had he been so dissatisfied with his clothes or found it so hard to twist on his turban. At last bedecked and bedazzled with flowers in the holes of the lobes of his ears and with his long sword, slung by a red string from his shoulder, dangling at his side, he meandered with his companions marketwards. Entering the market place from the opposite side, he was drawn as by an invisible magnet toward U-pim, who was still dreaming dreams and playing at shopping. Their eyes met, and blushes crept up her neck as red as the blood-stained mulberries of Pyramus and Thisbe. It was polite,

quite polite, to tarry and chat asking whence each came, where each lived, and of the health of father and mother and of all other relations. Separating they lingered and lingered separating, like a Romeo under a Juliet's window.

Courting time, about nine o'clock in the evening, found Hsam-law at the home of U-pim. He seems to have been expected, for she was nice and ready to welcome him. The old folks too were there and received, till they went to bed, a fitting and polite share of the lover's attention. Then the lovers chatted on of little nothings, as lovers will. Where there is mutual affection, love ripens quickly—by lamplight. Plucking the flowers from his ears, Hsam-law cast them into the bosom of his sweetheart. Since she felt and feigned no anger and made no attempt to hit him with her slipper, he knew—for such was their custom—that love's advances were welcomed. The sleepy-god touches the eyes even of lovers. Their marriage was arranged in heaven. As husband and wife they retire, and were not ashamed. Doubtless the mother's hands had already been rubbed with silver and gilded with gold, for the Shans never part with their daughters willingly without "milk-money," to pay at least in part for the cost and care in the days when the little hands could not earn enough to meet the expense of rice and curries and clothing.

In the early morning, while yet the lovers were locked in each other's arms, the father went away to his labour and the mother dusted the front room and set on the rice-pot for the morning meal. The sun was high in the sky when Hsam-law returned to his companions to be chaffed about his eyes swollen from loss of sleep. The party then went on to Möng-nawng and, having disposed of his tea, the young husband went back to Möng-köng, where the marriage was celebrated to give public announcement to the *fait accompli*. The gift of purchase was the pledge that the bride's trustfulness would not be abused nor her self-surrender dishonoured.

A few days later, U-pim, with her father's blessing, bade her weeping mother farewell and followed her husband to Möng-nawng. There from her mother-in-law, haughty

and disappointed, she received a cold and cruel reception. Her condition would have been unbearable but for the love of her husband whose affection was shown in all kindly ways. Twelve times since she came the full-moon had shown her face, and now her joy was enhanced for she expected soon to be a mother. Her very joy exasperated her defeated mother-in-law who would devise some means for her destruction. When her son, Hsam-law, as a travelling trader, was absent from home for a few days, she stuck the sharp points of knives up through the bamboo flooring and covered them with thin mats so that the mother-expectant, in walking over them, might wound her feet. Now the Shans have a superstition that if a young wife, about to be a mother, is wounded by accident or violence before her babe is born some terrible calamity will befall her. U-pim therefore was startled even more than she was pained by the wounds and loss of blood. She fled from the house and with her maids returned as fast as she could go to her old home in Möng-köng.

Soon thereafter Hsam-law came back and, hearing what had taken place, he sprang upon his swift horse and urged him to the top of his speed, hoping thereby to overtake his wife. Midway on his journey the people pointed out to him where U-pim had tarried for a night and had given birth to her babe, which had only a moment of life and now lay close by in its untimely grave. Hastening on, Hsam-law reached Möng-köng—too late. U-pim, exhausted by the trials and terrors of her flight, was even now entering on the longer journey to a more distant home. She shall not go alone. Drawing his sword from its scabbard, her faithful husband plunged it in his heart. And now, as a king and a queen in the sky, they meet whenever their star-palaces come in conjunction. These stars are their memorial, more enduring and more beautiful than the purple mulberries of Pyramus and Thisbe.

Now, something else: more interesting it may be, but scarcely more important, for nothing in this sinful world can be more important than the constancy and sweetness of human love. And here I will start in with an exceptionally

readable and informing quotation from Dr. Martin. In discussing the subject of alchemy (in China), he says: "Whether in the vegetable or the mineral kingdom, the researches of the Chinese alchemists were guided by one simple principle—the analogy of man to material nature. As in their view the soul was only a more refined species of matter, and was endowed with such wondrous powers, so every object in nature, they argued, must be possessed of a soul, an essence or spirit, which controls its growth and development—something not unlike the *essentia quinta* of Western alchemy. This they believed to be the case, not only with animals, which display some of the attributes of mind, but with plants, which extract their appropriate nourishment from the earth, and transform it into fruits; and the same with minerals, which they regarded as generated in the womb of the earth. It was to this half-spiritual, half-material theory that they had recourse to account for the transformations that are perpetually going on in every department of nature. As the active principle in each object was so potent in effecting the changes which we constantly observe, they imagined that it might attain to a condition of higher development and greater efficiency. Such an upward tendency was, in fact, perpetually at work; and all things were striving to 'purge off their baser fires' and enter on a higher state. Nor were they merely striving to clothe themselves with material forms of a higher order. Matter itself was constantly passing the limits of sense and putting on the character of conscious spirit. This idea threw over the face of nature a glow of poetry. . . . It filled the earth with fairies and genii. An easy step connected them with those mysterious points of light which in all ages have excited so powerfully the hopes and fears of the human race. Astrology became wedded to alchemy, and the five principal planets bear the names of the elements over which they are regarded as presiding."

Further on in his most excellent book, Dr. Martin restates the thought more briefly and, in other words, making somewhat clearer what he means: "The leading

principle of Taoism, of which their dogma concerning the human soul is only a particular application, is that every species of matter possesses a soul—a subtle essence that may become endowed with individual conscious life. Freed from their grosser elements, these become the genii that preside over the various departments of nature. Some wander at will through the realms of space, endowed with a protean facility of transformation; others, more pure and ethereal, rise to the regions of the stars, and take their places in the firmament. Thus the five principal planets are called by the names of the five terrestrial elements from which they are believed to have originated, and over which they are regarded as presiding. They are not worlds, but divinities, and their motions control the destinies of men and things—a notion which has done much to inspire the zeal of the Chinese for recording the phenomena of the heavens.”\*

This is the Shan conception fully, clearly and accurately stated. Whether the Shans got it in full from Taoism, or themselves made some contribution to Taoism, in the development of the theory, is now open to question. M. Terrien goes so far as to say: “We know that Taoism was largely influenced by the Shan.” If “we know” it, then it is certain. It is needless to say that no Shan, and possibly no Taoist, could have laid bare so clearly the substratum of his own conceptions or built up such a philosophical statement of his ill-defined theories. We are not surprised that this able writer continuing says: “In accordance with the materialistic character of the Taoist sect, nearly

\* *Lore of Cathay*, pp. 34, 35 and 183.

How far this subtle essence, the soul in all things which may become endued with individual conscious life, is from a common Christian conception may be inferred from Mr. James A. Froude's *Confession of Faith*: “It may be true—I for one care not if it be—that the descent of our mortal bodies may be traced through an ascending series to some glutinous jelly formed on the rocks of the primeval ocean. It is nothing to me how the Maker of me has been pleased to construct the organized substance which I call my body. It is *mine*, but it is not me. The *vous*, the intellectual spirit, being an *ovora*, an essence—we believe to be an imperishable something which has been engendered in us from another source.”

See *Calvanism : Short Studies on Great Subjects*, Vol. 11, p. 53.



all the gods whom the Chinese regard as presiding over their material interests originated with this school; and that the god of rain, the god of fire, the god of medicine, the god of agriculture and the lares or kitchen gods, are of this class." It is exactly so with the Shans—whatever the origin of the theory may have been. With both alike, those who have been initiated into the esoteric art hold a monopoly of astrology and geomancy according to which they select sites for building and burial, settle what occupation should be undertaken and when, determine the names of infants, and are the recognized and often highly respected masters of the whole degenerate system of magical imposture.

How this subtle essence and soul in all things, manifesting itself in many ways, is recognized in the practical life of the people may be seen in the following notes on various topics. Several years ago—to start in with—the present chief of north Hsenwi would select a site for a new town and called his astrological-geomancer to determine where it should be and when the work should begin. On one side of the lowland rice-fields, where the so-called "city" was to be built, there is a ridge running back into an undulating strath some twenty feet above the low-lying plain. From every economic and sanitary principle common-sense would at once have suggested this locality. There was natural drainage, and room for expansion if the city should happen to grow. From a mountain stream above water could have been conducted through every street and had enough left over for water power for rice and other mills, as they are made by the Shans. The astrological-geomancer decided otherwise. Down on the flat, overflowed with water in the rice-growing season, there was a small knoll with an elevation of three or four feet above the lower land and large enough for two or three hundred houses, by squeezing them in close together along narrow streets. Geomancy said that that was the auspicious spot and there the new capital was built. The lay of the land, the colour of the soil, the direction in which neighbouring streams flow, the size and shape of the rocks

above and below the surface, and other things of a like nature, determined the selection of the site; and the position of certain planets and constellations with reference to certain dates and events determined when the work should begin and when the city should be occupied after the work was done. Another reason given by the Shans for choosing this site for the new city is that it was the spot (selected as above) where the present chief made his final and successful stand against the Burmans. Hence it was regarded as a *kung mangkala* (Hill of Fortune); but even then the site was chosen by geomancy.

A missionary from the Emerald Isle, on hearing the foregoing read, exclaimed in language more forceful than elegant, "What rot!" So it is to our Western scientific presuppositions, but not so to a Shan. To him it is the acme of wisdom. In such cases he runs to the astrological-geomancer with the same confidence and eagerness that we run to a medical specialist when there is anything the matter with our physical machines. We have read so often, in Shakespere and elsewhere, of astrology that at least that part of this pseudo-science seems as familiar to us as the first lesson in a school primer. We are wont to say: "O, yes, the planets control the destinies of men and things because they are, according to this conception, not worlds but divinities." We need only to glance up at our calendars to be reminded of it all. What is the "Sun-mon-tue-wed-thu-fri-sat-god"—only a thumb-print of the same superstition. But the same thing holds good of the soil, of the rocks, and of the streams. They are all material manifestations of that subtile essence, of that *essentia quinta*, various outcroppings of the one transforming soul. Below the surface they are all godlets, spirits, genii, or whatever they may be called, and their forms differentiate them one from another as the saffron skin and oblique eyes of a Mongolian belle differentiates her from a society leader on a Parisian fashion plate. There is the same reason, or unreason, for consulting the soil, the rocks, and the streams that there is for mapping out the heavens to ascertain which "divinity" presides over a particular

place or thing at any particular time. The whole matter is as clear to the Western mind as mud, and no clearer. We can see that a Shan man may have what seems to him to be good reasons for his action, but we by no means understand what it is all about—neither does he.

The subject may brighten up a little as we go on with our notes on various topics. The Shan calendar may come in here; it may fittingly come under the general subject of myths because of the astrological use that is made of it. In our almanacs, derived from the Greek, use is still made of the zodiacal signs—the belt of animals and other things which mark off stages on the ecliptic. It is well known and often remarked that the zodiacal figures of the Hindus, ancient Persians, Chinese, and Japanese have such close resemblance to those of the Egyptians that there can be little doubt as to their common, and probably Babylonian, origin. To this group the zodiacal signs of the Anamites, the Siamese, the Laos, and of the Shans of Burma belong. They were taken from the Chinese in the same manner apparently as the latter were taken from the Babylonians. The Shans of Burma, until quite recently, reckoned time by the Chinese cycle, and still do so in astrological calculations. The cycle is supposed to have “five stems” and “twelve branches.” The former are double, with distinctive names for each; the latter, twelve in number, have the same names as the signs of the zodiac. The names of the twelve branches are: rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon (or naga), snake, horse, goat, monkey, cock, dog, and hog. These are more than mere signs. They are “His Celestial Divinity the Rat”; “His Right Royal Excellency the Ox”; “His Most Worshipful Highness the Tiger”; and so on. Thus it is said that the distinguished Li Hung Chang, in a great national crisis, worshipped “His Excellency the Rat.” His Excellency was doubtless some planet-divinity who was supposed to control the fortunes of a particular time or of particular events.

In working out the scheme for practical purposes, there is an interesting detail that may come in here: the Siamese, for instance, rearrange the cyclical table so that

the last two, the dog and the hog, of the first line begin the second line, thus dividing the cycle of sixty years into decades. They in connection with the cycle time was also reckoned by lunar months, and these again subdivided into the waxing (1st to 14th) and the waning (again 1st to 14th) lunations, with the full-moon between. Hence no such date as the 15th—or any number above—of a month is ever used. Thus a date may be put down in this fashion: “On Tuesday, 5th lutation, 9th of the waxing, year of the Hog, 9th of the decade (*i.e.*, March 28th, 1768), the Burmans opened fire . . . . into Ayuthia, the capital, etc.” As there were only fourteen days of waxing, and fourteen days of waning, with a full-moon day thrown in between, this made a total of but twenty-nine days. It was necessary, therefore, to introduce an intercalary day for half of the months, and an intercalary month every four or five years, to make the lunar correspond with the solar years. The Shans of Burma now use the (lunar) calendar of the Burmans.

In the *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States* there are translations from a magic book of a Shan from Mōng-mōng, beyond the British border, in western China. Full tables are given there of “lucky” and “unlucky” days. Some credulous white-folks still cling to the superstition that Friday is an unlucky day; but this is only one in seven, and occasions but little inconvenience. We may therefore be surprised to find that of the sixty days of the cycle, according to the tables, the proportion of unlucky to lucky days is more than two to one. The inconvenience and loss from such a superstition must be a most serious matter. On what principle the lucky and unlucky days are determined is known only to the initiated.

The planet or constellation under which a child is born enters into all calculations as to its fortunes. For astrological purposes, in casting horoscopes, the Burmese calendar also is sometimes used, along with the Chinese cycle, but the latter continues to hold first place. The names given in the Burmese calendar to the creatures, animal or otherwise, which preside over the waxing and

waning lunations, and full-moon day, and over the intercalary day when there is one, show that the latter tables came from Indian sources through the Burmans. Here the percentage of lucky to unlucky days, nearly one-half, is much larger than in the tables based on the Chinese cycle, which is said to be exactly the same as that used by the Taoist fortune-tellers.

The same book of magic quoted above tells what the spirits eat on each of the days of the month. The diet consists of other spirits, men, chickens, ducks, pigs, bulls, buffaloes, and horses. They do not mince and mix them up into a curry but seem to prefer to take of only one kind per day, thus varying the diet. The Wild Was still offer human sacrifices, and the Shans did so, off and on, until quite recent times. It is persistently told that it was the custom to bury a man alive when building a new palace in order that his spirit might become its guardian. How such spirits were kept from wandering away into wider fields and greener pastures is not revealed. According to reports, something differing not at all from human sacrifice was offered to "Sao-kang," the guardian spirit of the Kengtung lake. Four virgins, we are told, after being robbed of their virginity and otherwise debauched, were led away into the deep forests, two on either side of the city, and there abandoned. If they never returned, and it is said that they seldom did, it was a sure sign that they had been accepted by the guardian god. The offering, according to custom, was made once in every three years. The report may be mistaken that the custom is still kept up on the sly, but it is certain that it was openly done up to the time of British occupation.

In this Möng-möng Shan's book on magic there is a long section devoted to omens, omitted entirely from the translation given of it in the *Gazetteer*. It may have been regarded as too silly and inconsequential. However that may be, such omens are part and parcel of the Shan mythology, and have quite as conspicuous a place in the life of the Shans as formerly in the life of Greeks and Romans. Primitive races of the Orient, like these primitive

races of the Occident, see, or think they see, supernatural significance in certain unusual events. The Romans had their College of Augurs for the training of the youth upon whom the gods had conferred the divine gift. With the Shans also there is some method in the madness. If a young man wishes to become proficient in astrology for the casting of horoscopes, and in auguries, auspices, prodigies, signs, omens, or whatever they may be called, he puts himself under the instruction of a master in this—to him—exact science.

The Romans reduced their modes of divination to five: omens from the sky, as thunder and lightning; from the flight and noise of birds; from the feeding of fowls; from the movements of four-footed beasts; and from trivial but somewhat unusual occurrences, such as sneezing, stumbling, etc. In slightly varied forms, the Shans have all these, and more.

Of the first class (*augurium ex cælo*) there are auguries from comets, haloes, and from showers of meteorites. Earthquakes also may be included in this class. Whether these signs are good or bad is said to depend upon the day on which they occur. The signs from earthquakes may be given as a sample of them all. If the earthquake (following the Burman calendar) occurs on:

- Sunday—the country will have peace and happiness;
- Monday—crops of all kinds will be abundant;
- Tuesday—robbers will infest the land;
- Wednesday—a far country will present a princess;
- Thursday—a world-conqueror will be conceived;
- Friday—a great and hostile king will appear, devastate the country, and the good will suffer (unlucky Friday);
- Saturday—the rich, the wise, and the good will greatly multiply.

Of the second class (*ex avibus*), out of a large number the following may be sufficient to show the characteristics of them all:

- If a crane flies before you, you will meet an enemy;
- If on your left, you will have trouble;

If on your right, you will meet a friend ;  
If over your head, you will prosper ;  
If behind you, you will become rich and respected.

Of the third class (*ex tripudiis*) no specimens appear in this book on magic, but such signs are used. Auguries from the size and number of eggs a hen may lay, or on which she may sit, may do for this class and are more domestic :

If a hen lays a small egg, her master will have anxiety ;  
If a soft-shelled one, he will be poor and wretched ;  
If a large one, he will become rich ;  
If she lays an egg and crows over it, he will rise in rank.

With these signs might be classed the predictions from the flight and swarming of bees.

If we include spiders in the fourth class (*ex quadrupedibus*), the following auguries are characteristic :

If a lizard, rat, or spider drops on your head, you will be happy ;  
If on your instep, you will have flocks and herds ;  
If between ankle and knee, you will receive a present ;  
If it runs up to the thigh, you will get rich food ;  
If to the breasts, you will have good grandchildren ;  
If to the neck, you will get a new suit of clothes ;  
If to the top of the head, you will be prospered in every way.

It is hard to think of a white woman sitting quietly and unperturbed while a lizard, rat, or spider is running up to her neck or to the top of her head, even for such a boon as a new dress or for good luck in general.

Quite naturally, auguries of the fifth class (*ex diris*) exceed any other in number, for there is no limit to whims in this direction. These, as samples, may be as good as any :

If you start on a journey and hear the sound of crying before you, do not go on—a good man will die ;  
If behind you, you will receive presents of silver and gold ;  
If on your right hand, you will have trouble ;  
If on your left, you will meet one you love—keep right on.

If your right ear twitches, you will get a wife (or husband) ;

If your left ear, you will become rich ;

If the upper lip, you will possess servants and herds ;

If the lower lip, you will be a ready talker ;

If your right side, you will become famous ;

If your left side, a woman will deceive you.

The following miscellaneous prodigies come in general under this class :

If the water in a river or pond becomes as red as blood, the country will be laid waste by a devastating war (this is said to have happened at the destruction of Ayuthia by the Burmans).

If a man says or does anything which was never said or done before, the sign is very bad indeed ;—there is little danger of it in the conservative East.

If a man takes anything in his hand and it breaks without apparent cause, or if his turban falls off of its own accord, he will die.

When a fish jumps over a mountain, an enemy will capture our king. As this is impossible, it has the sound of a boastful proverb.

There are scores of signs from dreams. In some of these the forecasts are quite natural, thus :

If a man dreams of riding on a (springless) cart, he will have many sorrows—this always comes true.

If a man dreams of riding on an elephant, he will become a warrior-chief—formerly elephants were used in war.

If a man dreams of a garden, he will have peace and happiness—there is beauty in that.

If a man dreams of sitting on the sun, moon, or Mt. Mero, he will be a prince, honoured and beloved, or a holy monk the teacher of kings.

If a man dreams that there is an open door above him, he will conquer ;—though he might have to do something more than dream.



There are other predictions from dreams which draw their logic out of the air, thus :

If a man dreams that he has leprosy, itch, or eczema, he will be happy.

Others are not without humour :

Dream of pulling the tail of a tiger, and you will get a present from a king.

The following is a happy way of predicting the impossible :

Dream that a frog drank up the ocean, or of using Mt. Mero for a pencil, and you will rule the world.

Those who regard this nonsense as too sad and silly to be even ridiculous should remember that there are still intelligent cultured people in Europe and America who see all sorts of impending calamities in a dining table with thirteen plates ; that there are women who will not pick up a pin lying point toward them, lest they prick the thin supersensitive skin of friendship ; and that there are men who still hang over their doors the lucky horseshoe. To cap all, the writer once knew an Irish Catholic who habitually wore his socks inside out to keep the witches from tripping him up. This is not mentioned here, however, as an argument against Home Rule.

Another subject that may fittingly come in here is alchemy, which does not seem to have been peculiar to any particular race or portion of the globe. According to the well informed in regard to things Chinese, there were alchemists in China at a very early date, possibly as early as the beginnings of the practice in Egypt or elsewhere. Everywhere it seems to have risen from similar views of nature. Back of all phenomena there were a few elementary substances, and back of them, a primitive element of which they were but forms or manifestations. This quintessence or fifth essence was supposed to be the primal element of spirit or soul as well as of matter. If it could be discovered, it would at once be the all-healing medicine to indefinitely prolong life, and the irresistible solvent to transmute the baser metals into purest gold. The alchemists were the

forerunners of the chemists. There was much then, as there is now, to kindle the imagination and impel to research. They saw mercury dissolve gold, and sulphur penetrate hot iron, like a spirit, and make it run down in solid drops, possessed of properties belonging neither to the one nor to the other. Roger Bacon regarded potable gold (gold dissolved in nitro-hydrochloric acid) as the elixir of life, and nothing in romance is more romantic than his urging it upon the attention of Pope Nicholas IV, "informing His Holiness of an old man who found some yellow liquor in a golden phial, when ploughing one day in Sicily. Supposing it to be dew, he drank it off. He was transformed thereupon into a hale, robust and highly accomplished youth." Albert Magnus, perhaps with bibulous tendencies, made much of spirits of wine, and pronounced it to be the very elixir of life. As all things in heaven and in earth were supposed to have come from one primal essence, alchemy readily mixed up with astrology and geomancy. Shan alchemy came from China, but to what extent it arose among the early Shans of that country, and to what extent it was borrowed from the Chinese, cannot now be determined with certainty. Of the rise of alchemy among the Chinese, Dr. Martin says, in the passage already quoted, "whether in the vegetable or the mineral kingdom, the researches of the Chinese alchemists were guided by one simple principle—the analogy of man to material nature."

Similar views seem to have been familiar to the Romans. In Virgil, Anchises explains to his son, Æneas, the plan of creation. The Creator originally made the material of which souls are composed of fire, air, earth, and water (as the Shans hold to this day), all of which took, when united, the form of fire and became a flame. This seminal principle was scattered among the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon and stars, and of it the inferior gods created man and all other animals, mixing with it various portions of earth thus reducing its purity. After death, the soul in Elysium was cleansed either by ventilating it in the wind (the modern open-air cure),

immersing it in water, or by burning out the impurities with fire.\*

Similar ideas of the fundamental unity of all life crop out in Egyptian fables. The soul of Bata dwelt in the heart of a flower of the acacia tree and became incorporated in its seed. Three years after Bata died, the seed was soaked in water and the water administered to the dead body brought it to life again in the form of a bull. When the bull was sacrificed he shook his neck and two drops of blood striking against the door of the Pharaoh's palace and falling, one on either side, from them two persea trees grew up in a night. When the trees were cut down, a chip flying up entered the mouth of the princess; she swallowed it and in due time gave birth to a son, who, on the death of the Pharaoh, succeeded to the throne and ruled Egypt for thirty years.†

These are the same ideas as are still rampant among the Shans. Not only the soul of man, but the life of plants, is this essence or spirit. We are told in a Shan book of magic that the time to set out plants is when this "spirit" is active (hkün) and that the time to refrain from setting them out is when this spirit is passive (tok), and the same word (hpi) is used that would have been used in speaking of any terrestrial or celestial spirit.

It is persistently reported of more than one of the present sawbwas (chiefs) of the Shan states that they not only believe in the possibility of transmuting baser metals into gold, but that they have actually tried to do so. One of them is said to have spent in past years thousands of rupees in seeking to make a "magic ruby," which, if put in the mouth, would enable the happy possessor to fly. If he had succeeded, he might have sold his invention to the Germans for a million marks, for military purposes. Nothing could excite British suspicions more than to see the German Emperor, for instance, flying over their little island looking for a safe landing-place for an invading army. In view of this all-pervasive essence or spirit,

\* See Bulfinch, *The Age of Fable*, p. 329.

† See *Masterpieces and History of Literature*, Vol. I, p. 55, seq.

we may now better understand why a conscientious Buddhist monk will not cut down a green shrub, unless a novitiate hacks it first and holds on while the dangerous deed is done.

It is said that the Shans, in times past, sought for the elixir of life and believed it to exist in some fountain somewhere. The search seems to have been given up, at least among the Shans of Burma. They still speak indefinitely, however, of some spring or stream of which if one drink one will attain to perpetual youth. The many hot springs of the Shan states, containing medicinal properties, may account in part for the fancy. The Shan cosmogony, already referred to, speaks of an elixir called "nam-pu-lawk," but this was obtained at the beginning of creation from the cosmic spider, and was the peculiar possession of the gods. In view of it all, more than the Jew (in *Tales of a Wayside Inn*) may be reminded of the Manichæan's prayer :

" Therefore the Manichæan said  
This simple prayer on breaking bread,  
Lest he with hasty hand or knife  
Might wound the incarcerated life,  
*The Soul in things* that we call dead.  
I did not reap thee, did not bind thee,  
I did not thresh thee, did not grind thee,  
Nor did I in oven bake thee.  
It was not I, it was another  
Did these things unto thee, O brother ;  
I only have thee ; hold thee ; break thee."

There is much in the Shan astrological nonsense that must be omitted from lack of room, but the following may be of sufficient interest to young lovers and sweethearts to justify its place here. Moreover, it is curious and is a picture of the condition of the people as a race of farmers, engaged at times in barter or other forms of petty trade. In the Shan book it is spun out and takes up several pages, but in tabulated form one page may do as well. It needs however a word of explanation : if a young man wishes to marry he must choose his maid with special reference to the birthday of each. Otherwise the planet-divinities that preside over the respective days may disagree, the lovers

themselves may fall out, and many direful things may happen. Then nearly all of the Shans are farmers or traders or both, and the day of birth determines the kind and colour of the stock he (or she) may keep, and the articles of trade. As images are mentioned, we may assume that this little business guide was revised after the introduction of Buddhism, though not necessarily so. That is not all; the Shans carry about with them hand-bags or purses, and before the days of minted money, they used junk-silver and in trading carried about with them a pair of small scales and little brass weights made in various shapes and sizes, always images of one thing or another. Last of all, everybody had a precious stone sacred to him, varying according to his birthday. With this little word of explanation, the following table should be quite clear. It is good for man or maid :

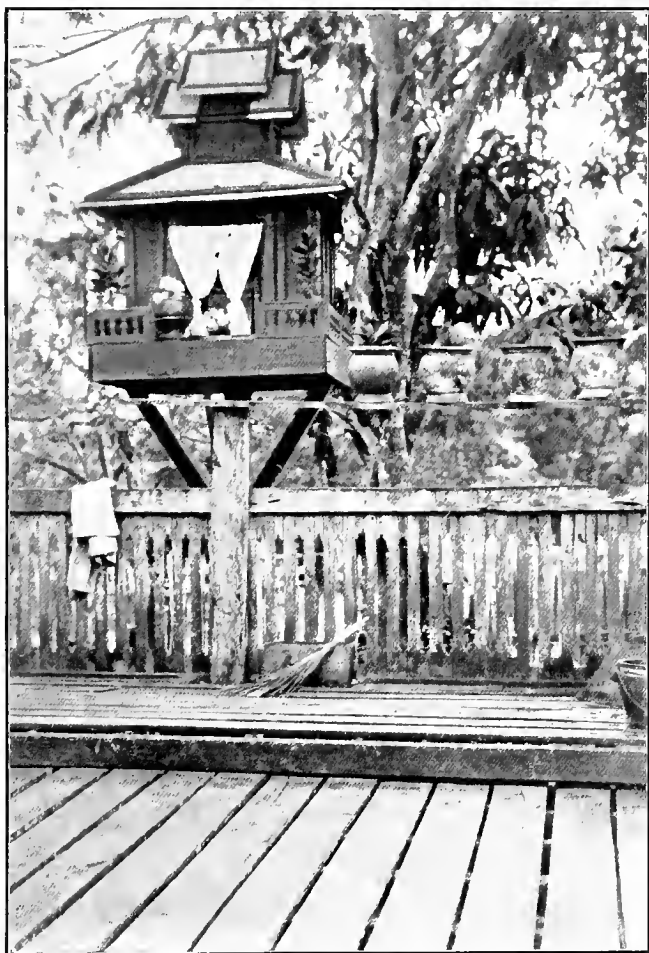
If born on	Marry person born on	Keep stock of this colour	Trade in	Worship image made of	Carry purse of this colour	Carry weight of this form	Gem sacred to you
Sun.	Thu.	Red or dun	Cotton or cattle	Sandal-wood	White or red	Man	Jade or ruby
Mon.	Wed.	Any cattle or elephants	Rice	Ti-wood	White	(Yellow) horse	Sapphire
Tue.	Fri.	Striped or spotted	Varnish, tobacco	Hen-wood	Green	Goose	Ruby
Wed.	Mon.	Red or black	Tea	Jujube	Brown	Heap of rice	Pearl
Thu.	Sun.	Red	Red cattle	Wax-wood	Red	Ass	Coral
Fri.	Tue.	"Dull colour"	Cattle of dull colour	Eugenia	Dull colour	Elephant	Onyx
Sat.	Wed.	Brown	Salt	Pao (engyin)	Red	Ass	Topaz

## SHAN BUDDHISM.

It is well known that the world's Buddhism is divided into two camps: Buddhism of the Mahayana type or of the Northern Canon, and Buddhism of the Hinayana type or of the Southern Canon. The former is found in Tibet, China, Japan, and in some outlying districts; the latter is found in Ceylon, Burma, Siam, Cambodia, extreme south-western China, and in a few other spots. These camps are not necessarily hostile, but they differ from each other more than do the great divisions of Christianity, Protestantism and Roman and Greek Catholicism. Shan Buddhism, of the present time, is of the Southern Canon.

There are those who maintain that it was not always so; that northern Buddhism was first introduced, but later became displaced by southern Buddhism. The argument rests at present on conjectures to some extent, but not wholly so. It is known that Sanskrit-using Buddhists, of the Northern Canon, settled in the basin of the Irrawaddy long before "Pâli-Buddhism," of the Southern School, gained a solid footing there. It left footprints, by way of inscriptions and the like, sufficiently numerous to make a beaten track across the field of Burmese Buddhism. The settlements from Northern India in the valley of the Irrawaddy; the indication of the presence of Northern Indians at old Ta Kawng (Tagaung); and other evidence which we may not stop to give here, makes it certain that northern Buddhism may have been introduced as early as the beginning of the Christian era—and it endured till the time of Anawrata in the eleventh century A.D. During the latter part of that period it became corrupted by the "Aris,"\* with their *jus primæ noctis* and their naga-worship, but it was there.

\* See *Burmese Sketches*, p. 26.



THE PENATES OR HOUSEHOLD SHRINE.

*Facing page 150.*





During all that period, the Shans, as we have seen, were dominant in the basin of the upper Irrawaddy, and in the earlier part of it their domination may have extended southward as far as Prome. The fact that the Sanskrit inscriptions, and other evidences of northern Buddhism, have been found in regions now occupied by Burmans proves nothing against the theory that that form of Buddhism once existed among the Shans of Burma. Since the Shans were more numerous and more powerful in the valley of the Irrawaddy than the Burmans, during all the Christian centuries preceding Anawrata, a supposition that they, as well as the Burmans, were converted to northern Buddhism is by no means a violent one.

The Shans of Burma, during the same period, were, as we have also seen, only a westward extension of the powerful and well-organized Shan kingdom of Nan-chao. That the Shans of Ta Kawng had connections with India is clearly stated in the Shan writings and their folk-lore mentions the escapades of the Shan youths who, it is alleged, went to north India to be taught "the sciences." Whether this be so or not, that the great kingdom of Nan-chao had political, commercial, and possibly religious relations with northern India is believable. It is inferable also that religious influences might have percolated through from Tibet. Of the relations which existed between Nan-chao and Tibet before the eighth century, we know but little. That certain relations, at least commercial, existed, there is little room to doubt. The pasture lands of the two kingdoms were adjacent. That a few Buddhist bulls of the northern breed may have jumped the fence and left their mark on Nan-chao, as a Manx tom-cat is said to have left his on the Isle of Man, is certainly within the range of possibilities. That the Shans of Nan-chao might have been converted to the northern form of Buddhism by missionary effort from Mongolia, as Sir George Scott maintains, is less likely, but possible. Even this does not exhaust the range of possibilities.

The last possibility is the greatest possibility of all. Buddhism was introduced into China in the first century

A.D. By the end of the fourth century, "nine-tenths" of China was Buddhist, according to Prof. Parker.\* Considering the vastness of that empire, the millions of her people, and the heterogeneousness of the languages spoken, this is or seems to be an over-statement; but that Buddhism had even then been planted in every province of China, and was sweeping on like a forest fire, is scarcely open to doubt. From no later than the fourth or fifth century, the Shans were surrounded by Buddhists of the Northern Canon (except on the south). If northern Buddhism did not slop over into Nan-chao, that milk-pan was carried with an unusually steady hand.

The flourishing period of Buddhism in China was from the fifth to the twelfth centuries. During all these centuries Nan-chao was a vassal—often a rebellious and turbulent one—of China. But the spread of Chinese Buddhism among these Shans was not necessarily limited to the degree of political control. That the Shans of Nan-chao really adopted northern Buddhism from the Chinese in those early centuries is, so far, largely conjectural. I come now to some evidence, circumstantial to be sure, but more definite.

Mr. Taw Sein Ko, by dint of his knowledge of Chinese, has made the discovery that several Sanskrit words in Burman Buddhism have the same form that they have in Chinese Buddhism. From this he draws the conclusion that Buddhism of the Mahayana type was introduced into Burma by the kindly offices of Chinese missionaries. It is easy to dismiss his argument with a flourish of a facile pen, but his list of sixteen words unaccommodatingly remain. Their presence there is not and cannot be an accident. Such things do not happen, without any efficient cause at all. Either the Chinese got those peculiar forms of Sanskrit words from the Burmans, or the Burmans got them from the Chinese. I think the latter is the historic fact, and I see the possibility that the Shans were the agents in conveying those Sanskrit words from China to Burma.

Mr. Taw Sein Ko is of the opinion that the Chinese themselves were the agents; that Chinese missionaries made

\* See Parker's *China and Religion*, pp. 85—88.

Burma a sort of half-way house between China and India ; and that they were able to exert a dominant influence because of China's supremacy. He sums up his argument as follows :—

“ (1) Before the conquest of Thatôn by Anawrata, King of Pagan, in the eleventh century A.D., the Upper Valley of the Irrawaddy professed the Mahayanist School of Buddhism.

(2) At Tagaung, Prome, and Pagan, in the early centuries of the Christian era, Chinese missionaries taught Buddhism in Chinese, side by side with Indian missionaries who taught 'it in Sanskrit, but Chinese political influence being in the ascendant, Chinese monks were in greater favour and their teaching made greater headway.

(3) Indian missionaries who visited China, and Chinese missionaries who visited India, reached their destination through Burma, their route being through Bassein and Bhamo.

(4) Burma, being a half-way house between India and China, received the converging influences of Buddhism ; but the latter country being the nearer neighbour, Chinese influences became predominant.”\*

On the whole this seems to be historically correct ; but it is not quite sufficient to account for the presence of Chinese forms of Sanskrit words in Burman Buddhism. To implant those words there would require direct, persistent, long-continued effort, and much of it. A predominant influence reaching through several centuries might do it ; nothing less would. There is little evidence, if any, that the Chinese missionaries ever came into Burma except as occasional stragglers. The most of these pilgrims seem to have reached northern India *viâ* Turkestan, and not by this southern route ; a few however may have entered and settled in Burma (*see* Eddins, *Chinese Buddhism*, Chap. VI). Of Chinese settlements there appear to have been none at all. If it be granted that the Shans of Nan-chao were converted to northern Buddhism by Chinese influence, we have at once the agents required. “ The Upper Valley of the Irrawaddy ”

\* *Burmese Sketches*, p. 29.

was inhabited by Shans and was a part of Nan-chao. Nan-chao was dominant in that locality till as late as the eighth century at least, and probably till the middle of the tenth. During the whole period in which northern Buddhism flourished in the basin of the Irrawaddy, the Burmans, as compared with the Shans, were a feeble folk. Pagan itself was overshadowed by the Shans till the days of Anawrata. An assumption that the Burmans got those Chinese forms of Sanskrit words from the Shans, and that the latter got them from the Chinese direct, would be adequate and consistent with known historical conditions. There is presumptive proof here that the Shans were converted to northern Buddhism.

There is a little more of this circumstantial evidence. The old Ahom (Shan) literature is largely, if not wholly, a Cambodia River product. With the exception of the record of local events, it seems to have been brought into these regions here at the time of the southern Shan invasion, and to have been carried into Assam at the time of the conquest of that country in the early part of the thirteenth century. The "Northern Kingdom" (Nan-chao), Möng-t'ien, Möng-hi, Möng-la, Möng-myen, and several of the Shan states west of the Salween, are mentioned; not only mentioned, but that is where they "lay their scene." The oldest fragment of that literature is the "Ahom Cosmogony." In that cosmogony *Sao-Ing* has the character of the *Adi-Buddha*, who belongs to northern Buddhism. If we could be sure that this cosmogony was taken from these parts into Assam, just as it stands (and was not modified later), we would have conclusive proof that the Shans were converted to northern Buddhism, before the introduction of southern Buddhism. The reference in that cosmogony to the "eggs" and to "*nam-~~pu~~-lawk*" seems to be from Chinese Buddhism.

There is still a little more: let us have it all. Sir George Scott, Mr. Taw Sein Ko, and perhaps others, have claimed that the Shans of Nan-chao must have had letters and a literature; that, otherwise, it would be impossible to explain their vast extension, their effective political organization, and the freedom from dialectic differences in the language of a

people so widely separated. If they had an alphabet at all, in those early days, it was unquestionably a northern alphabet. Since the Shans of Burma came in direct touch with northern Buddhism, introduced from northern India, it is quite possible that they adopted the same ancient alphabet that the Burmans used, and, like the ancient Burman alphabet, that it was later supplanted by an alphabet from the south. Even if this were to be granted, it would affect in no way my claim that the present Shan alphabet came mainly from the Talain. I am inclined to think, however, that the Shans of Yünnan were educated in Chinese, in so far as they had any letters at all. Even among the Chinese themselves, a knowledge of literature was in those days confined very largely to the higher classes; the percentage of illiterates among the Chinese is still very large in our own day. If the Shans of Yünnan ever had a literature of their own, or any of the Shans in China (apart from those who have adopted southern Buddhism and an alphabet based on the "Pâli"), that literature was manifestly destroyed in the devastating wars of many centuries. The vast majority of the Shans in south-western China have now no books and are not Buddhists. But here in Burma an earlier Burmese alphabet was largely displaced by a later alphabet from southern Burma. The same process may have been at work among the Shans of the upper Irrawaddy valley and in these western Shan states. There is an indication of it in the northern Shan alphabets themselves. The aspirated letters *gh*, *jh*, and *dh* occur in the Talain and the modern Burmese alphabets, but are absent from the Tibetan and the Shan. They may have been absent also from the ancient Burmese alphabet. There are two ways in which to account for the omission so far as the Shan alphabets are concerned.

The Lao alphabet, which I regard as the mother of all the Shan alphabets (with the exception to a large extent of the Siamese) has 45 consonants—46 by including a letter sometimes classed as a nasal vowel. About one-half only of these were needed for purely consonantal purposes; the others were retained for *tonal* indications. The northern

Shans have sloughed off all but two of their tonal expedients and these two are going out of fashion. The letters referred to were not used because they were not required—for any purpose whatever. Again, if we allow that the Shans (like the Burmans) had an earlier alphabet in which these letters did not occur, they naturally would not introduce them in borrowing an alphabet from the Talains or elsewhere. The question of an earlier alphabet and of a northern form of Buddhism among the Shans, and of their present alphabet and their present form of Buddhism must be kept distinct. The Shan Buddhism and the Shan letters and literature of to-day are of the Southern School.\*

This is safe: the learned archæologist has boxed the compass. If the Shan alphabet did not come from these sources, it came from the moon. I am inclined to think that there was an earlier Shan alphabet and literature (which has since perished) which came from some of these sources, and that the present alphabet and literature came from the others. Such a supposition seems to meet all the conditions and requirements better than any other.

How now shall we treat the subject of Shan Buddhism of this Hinayana type? What shall be our method of procedure? If "Buddhism . . . was a philosophy in revolt against

\* On the whole question of the Shan alphabets and of the introduction of a Buddhist literature—for they came together—Mr. Taw Sein Ko writes:

"I am inclined to think that the alphabet of the Shans of Burma is derived from the following sources:—

(i) from Tibet through Nan-chao. The absence of the fourth letter of each class (*gh*, *jh*, *dh*, *dh*) of the consonants, as in Tibetan, is very significant. The geographical contiguity and the close political relations of the two countries have also to be considered.

(ii) from Southern India through Prome. According to Burmese history, Shan dominion extended to Prome before the Christian era.

(iii) from the Talaings of Pegu through the Lao Province. The Laos came into contact with the Talaings before they met the Burmans, and probably passed on the borrowed alphabet to the Shans.

(iv) from Southern India through Champā, Cambodia and Kieng-Sen. Champā received its letters and civilization from Southern India. It was absorbed by Cambodia, which was, in its turn, absorbed by Kieng-Sen, which was again subject to Nan-chao.

The above is a skeleton sketch showing the probable derivation of the Shan alphabet. If it is adopted by you, the problem of the Shans having a common script, before their dispersion in the thirteenth century, and of the solidarity of their speech and culture, which is based upon a common speech and a common religion, will be solved."

certain teachings and ceremonies of Brahmanism ” and “ set forth a system of ethics which both in the letter and in the spirit is undoubtedly the best the world has ever had outside the Jewish and Christian religions,” then why not follow the stages in the development of the philosophy and of the ethical system ? Such a method might satisfy the Western demand for logic, but it would misrepresent Shan Buddhism as it is. There is, among the Shans, no such logical unfolding of the philosophy and ethics. We might do better perhaps to take up the Shan Buddhistic books in their order : the three main divisions of the Pitakat, the Zats (Jatakas), and the numerous Homilies ; but these again overlap and run into each other in the Shan books.

It seems better therefore to select brief paragraphs, here and there, which fairly illustrate the style of treatment and the religious lessons as a whole. The Shan writers have been numerous and prolific ; they have also been Oriental in the exuberance of imagination, unbridled fancy running riot in a wilderness of words. It will be necessary therefore to boil everything down or otherwise reduce it, without the loss of substance in the process of evaporation. There is something else here which ought to be mentioned, and came nigh being utterly forgotten : in a book of this kind and for this purpose, it may be far better to fill the limited space that can be given to the Shan form of Buddhism to samples from the religious books that are the most popular, read the most, and hence have the greatest influence over the religious thought and life of the people, rather than try to give a logical treatment of the subject or a synopsis of the literature as a whole.

Writings somewhat philosophical or psychological, and glossographs of Pâli words and phrases, though important and indispensable in a thorough study of Shan Buddhism, may be omitted ; they are but little read ; so little that I had considerable difficulty in finding a copy, in the Shan language, of so important a book as the Dhammapada. The most popular parts of the literature are cast up in story form. Samples from these, taken from a wide range, may be given. If the samples are fairly representative, and given

practically without comment, leaving the reader to judge of values for himself, no reasonable fault can be found. It is much better here to give what Shan Buddhism is than to give opinions of it, though those opinions might be kind, just, sane, and sincere.

The first book put into the hands of the boys in the monastic schools, and the only one that many of them ever read, is called *Sutta Nibbana*. I may as well begin with that as with anything. A Buddhist primer would have been a more fitting name, for its stories, told in easy Shan, are by no means confined to the subject indicated. The first story, in this book of stories, gives the "five duties" or commandments: "Not to take life," etc., but incidentally gives something else and it is on this other thing that particular stress is laid. In the Roman Catholic Church there is a doctrine according to which a person may perform good works which are considered as more than sufficient to "work out his own salvation," and the superabundance of which God may credit to another whose account is short. This performance of more than is absolutely required is called "supererogation." The striking similarity between many Roman Catholic and Buddhistic forms of worship, as the candles, the rosary, etc., have often been pointed out; but here we find Roman Catholicism entering the field of Buddhist doctrine in this matter of negotiable goodness. There is, of course, one radical difference between the two doctrines: the Roman Catholics have a divine cashier to pay over the balance, while in Buddhism it is Nature only that delivers the goods. I do not wish to intimate that there was any borrowing. The desire to help the dead that need the aid of the living is a natural and praiseworthy sentiment. Even if their epitaphs do say that they were saints without a peer in this sinful world, the fact that they stole horses cannot be recalled with perfect complacency. Now the story in substance which is too long to give in full :

Once upon a time the Buddha, Gautama, after he had delivered eighty thousand of the distinguished race of Sakyas, was preaching in the presence of his father, the



king, of his aunt, Gautami, who had brought him up, for his own mother, Maya, died soon after giving him birth, and of countless brahmas, spirits, men, and animals. With bright beams of four colours, red, yellow, white, and green, streaming from his person, gleaming like the radiance of a revolving pearl, and with mouth fragrant as sandal-wood and all odoriferous substances, he proclaimed the five duties : not to take life, even of an insect squeezing it in the hand ; not to steal, even a thing as small as a particle of seed split fine ; not to be guilty of illicit sexual intercourse, a sin so great that, measured, would stretch to the end of the age, to the destruction of the world ; not to lie or indulge in any language injurious to another, a heavy transgression ; and not to drink intoxicating drinks, which is against the rule of righteousness.

The swift punishment which befalls the transgression of these duties now follows : A rich man and his wife, living in the age of the Buddha Wipasi, were good-looking and quite respectable in many ways. Withal, they were very religious, as many rich folks are. They were very punctilious in observing the forms of worship and made exceedingly large offerings each revolving moon for one hundred thousand years—for people lived long in those days. But at last they died, as all must. In their next life they became black ghosts and lived in a graveyard near the town. There they suffered much from frost and heat. When they died, they left two daughters, twelve and fourteen years of age respectively, just blossoming into womanhood. They loved their parents with a great love, and spent a large part of their inheritance in offerings to get them out of purgatory.

One night, at midnight, their parents appeared to them and asked them to go to the Buddha Wipasi and ascertain whether anything could be done for them to get them out of their dire distress. The affectionate and dutiful daughters went to Wipasi, as requested, and reverently laid the case before him. They confessed that, for their parents' sake, they would most gladly spend in offerings not only their heritage but would sell themselves into slavery or even die for them.

Wipasi was quite human and told them that they were both very pretty girls. But, as to offerings, he affirmed that though they should spend the last pice in building and offering monasteries of silver, of gold, or of precious stones, it would avail their parents nothing. It would bring great gain to them personally, but the ghosts would still be ghosts and suffer from cold and heat. Being omniscient, he knew and said that their parents had broken the commandments. In their haste to be religious, they had forgotten to be moral and religion disassociated from morality was worthless. They had killed a myna still young in its nest to make medicine for convulsions ; they had stolen a cake of silver and a spindle of thread ; the wife had illicit intercourse with another man ; thus in one way and another, they had broken every commandment and every duty had perished. All their offerings could not deliver them. Even the rich must be good as well as pious. After suffering for almost countless years as ghosts, they must fall into the copper cauldron of hell. Hearing this, the daughters were grieved beyond measure, for they loved their parents very much indeed.

The little girls bowed low at the feet of the great Wipasi and pleaded : " Is there not some place of refuge in the Three Baskets of the Law where they that have sinned may be free from the consequences of their evil deeds ? " The great teacher, sorry for them, said that there was. There was one gift so meritorious that it would save not only the giver, but save father, mother, children, friends, whoever may have died sinful but regretted. It was not in silver nor in gold, not in the gift of one's own life ; not in the sacrifice of wife or children. It was the Sutta Nibbana, the scripture so precious that even the Buddhas bow down before it in worship, and the mighty ones of hell shudder at its recital.

Then were the hearts of the sisters made exceedingly glad, so glad that waving their hands up and down, they danced with bared breasts about the Buddha, crying aloud : " Now shall our parents, who are in distress through evil deeds, be saved. " They at once returned home, and called a writer

skilful in copying the scriptures to write for them a copy of the Sutta Nibbana. When the book was ready, they wrapt it in a satin cover and laid it on a tray with sweet-scented flowers ; then bowing down reverently they adored the book, with hands uplifted in worship. Though the book had not yet been offered to Wipasi, the merit thereof went immediately to their parents. They, instantly benefiting thereby, were changed in the twinkle of an eye into a good spirit-prince and a good spirit-princess ; and its power also created a golden palace in the abode of spirits, wherein were gathered all manner of clothing, ornaments, and delicate food suitable for kings and queens. There, too, were female dancers waving their round arms and singing, and two thousand attendants waiting expectantly for the coming of the prince and princess, formed by the meritorious power of the Sutta Nibbana.

Leaving their golden palace in the spirit country, they came, like two moons side by side, to their daughters just at midnight. In praise of the Sutta Nibbana, they told them how they were now living in the beautiful palace, free from all their past transgressions and sufferings. They prayed that their dear children too might reach the spirit-land and dwell there in happiness for a long time. Then they flew away in their golden carriage, returning quickly to their happy spirit-home. The two little sisters were overjoyed and, putting away their sorrow, lived most happily. Early in the morning, a day pleasant and clear and without a cloud, they took the book in their arms, together with many kinds of food, and went to make their offering to Wipasi. The great teacher enhanced the merit of their act by receiving their gift. Then they asked that the precious book might be given back to them that they might take it home and adore it so long as they might live. Wipasi, returning the book, told them to call a man, skilful in reading the Scriptures, to read it to them on worship days, four times each revolving moon, to gain more merit. This they did through a long life of one hundred thousand years. When they died, the older became the beautiful daughter of the sun-prince, Suriya ; and the younger became the beloved daughter of the full-moon,

Santa, whose silvery beams shine everywhere on the island of men. All the male spirits of the six spirit heavens came down and begged her love in vain. Even Ingta (Indra) dwelt in desire of her even to weeping.\*

(He was not therefore so ingenious as his brother, Jupiter, who, to get at the captive Danæ whom he loved, shone upon her through a chink in the wall, by changing himself into a shower of gold.)

This same doctrine of supererogation is implied in the "invocations" which the Shan writers ever compose and insert at the beginning of religious books copied for offerings and occasionally they are seen in some monastery where they were tacked up when the building was dedicated. Here is one such literally translated :

"May success and victory attend me. With a view to exalt the Buddha's religion and thereby secure emancipation from the miseries of existence, I, the Prince of Mao, and my family, erected this monastery, which from its situation on the south side of the city may be called the Southern Monastery. . . . It was varnished, painted, gilded and glazed in the most artistic manner, and was offered to the Maha-thera. . . . For this meritorious work may we escape in every existence from the four abodes of punishment, the eight sinful states, the three calamities, the five enemies, the eight sins, the ten kinds of punishment, the sixteen kinds of peril, the twenty-five kinds of danger, the thirty-two kinds of torment, and the ninety-six kinds of disease.

"May we be endowed with longevity, beauty, happiness, strength, and wisdom ; may we be replete with power and glory, with the seven kinds of saintly properties, and the ten kinds of meritorious deeds and virtues. May we attain the four paths leading to Nirvana, and the fruition thereof, and finally to Nirvana's happy state. May this merit of ours be shared by rulers, kings and queens, teachers, parents,

\* Mr. Taw Sein Ko writes : "There is no work in Burmese corresponding to this *Sutta Nibbana*. According to the Burmese form of Buddhism, the sin of the parents could never be expiated by their children making copies of religious manuscripts. The law of Karma is like the law of gravitation : it is inexorable, and ever present. Its operation may be for a time suspended, but it can never be stopped."

relatives and elders, by the inhabitants of the earth, of the six abodes of heaven, the twenty abodes of brahmas and by myriads of creatures whose number and kind no tongue can tell."

There is super-abounding merit and supererogation in that for generations yet unborn. Let our good friends, the Roman Catholics, look well to their laurels.

The next story in the aforementioned book of stories is told to illustrate the heinousness of sins of pride in general and of the lips in particular. Here again it is the incidental part that is the most interesting. In Christianity (of all schools) there is a sentiment that peculiar sanctity is attained through the frequent repetition of an *Ave Maria*, the chanting of a *Paternoster*, or the singing of a *Doxology*. There is the same in Buddhism. Nothing is more common in the Shan states than to hear pious old men chanting a "*kamma-htan*" (brief doctrinal texts) or equally pious old women saying over and over in a sanctimonious way the dolorous refrain: "*Anicca, dukkha, anatta*" (all is fleeting, full of sorrow, and unreal). There is no borrowing here. The sentiment is natural and, to a certain extent, psychologically true. Now the story in brief:

Dewadat was stupid, lying, and abusive. He assumed at least an equality with Gautama, "though he had not become supreme in the path of duty." The Buddha, with great compassion, urged him to repeat many times a day the meritorious words, "*Phakawa-Araham*," but he was so stupid and lazy that he did so only once in every ten or twenty days. Even then by the power of the words he attained the power of flying through the air, "lightly ascending above the clouds, unto the regions near the sun, moon and stars." This he did to draw attention to himself. He was angry because Gautama reproved him for making such a display of his power, and attributed the good counsel to fear, saying in his heart: the Buddha is afraid that he may lose prestige. He claimed also that he was the better man, for he had never eaten meat and from childhood had never had intercourse with any woman. At last he withdrew to live by himself with his disciples. Growing from bad to worse, the earth swallowed him up, and he sank down to the place of

torment. "His obduracy was as sand grating on the teeth." I may repeat that this story, like all the stories to be told here, is much condensed from the expansive original.

Since sins of the lips have been mentioned, we may have here, from another source (Abhidhamma), what purports to be a discourse of Gautama on sins through the bodily organs. The book states that this discourse was so deep that merely human beings could not understand it; so Gautama went up to the top of Mt. Mero and, sitting on the kampala or cushion of the prince of the celestial sakyas, delivered it there. As given in the Shan it might have issued from the sweet lips of the mistress of a kindergarten. It has often been said that Buddhism, as it is to-day, lays much stress on acts of sin, and but little comparatively on motives or states of the will from which, as from a fountain, all sins proceed. This is certainly true of Buddhism as presented in the Shan books. It would not be just to infer it merely from the following tales, but unfortunately it is characteristic of the literature as a whole. First of all we have sins of the eye.

Once upon a time there lived in a cave on a high mountain a beautiful peacock. He found his food by a lake below. He lived as a hermit, observing the law. On a night, the queen of that country had a dream, dreaming that she heard him preach and longed to get possession of him. She sent forth sportsman after sportsman, but they all died in the attempt. Finally the queen herself died, but seven generations of her descendants continuing tried to get possession of the bird. Then there arose a mighty hunter, wise and strong. For seven days he sat in hiding before the cave and watched. Daily in issuing forth from the cave in search of food, the peacock recited the text "Utetaram" three times before flying away. On returning, he recited the text "Apetaram" three times before entering the cave to sleep. The hunter thought in his heart this is no common bird, so wise and good. Having considered what to do, he went away in search of a peahen. He caught one and spent many months in teaching it to sing. Then having set his snare by the lake, he began

to sing, and the peahen sang too. The peacock, coming forth from his cave, heard the song and looking away toward the lake saw the beautiful peahen. Filled with desire for her, he forgot to say his prayer, and flying quickly away to the lake was caught in the snare. Too late he bethought himself of his sacred text. He owned that he had been justly caught, and besought the hunter to put him to death. The hunter refused saying, I must take you to the king. Again the peacock pleaded, but in vain. My eye betrayed me, said he. I am caught by love of a beautiful female. The people will laugh and I shall be much ashamed.

Of sins of the ear, it is alleged that Gautama opened his mouth as fragrant as sandal-wood and all odoriferous substances and taught: The celestial brahmas have eyes and ears but neither see nor hear; they are without sexual organs, and are neither male nor female; hence they are called "Sang" (the Pure). Once upon a time a brahma died and was re-born as the son of a queen. As a human being he was without proper affection and cared not to look at even his own mother's face. He ate the food placed before him with indifference, whether it was good or bad. For the opposite sex he was without desire. His father, the king, anxious lest the dynasty should run out knew that he must excite and arouse in his son the sexual passion. He therefore called a famous musician, a maiden, to come before his son to play and sing. For seven evenings she came and came no more. The son seemed to miss the music and asked for her. Then the king called another musician, a maiden with a harp of thirty-three strings, each string giving forth the sound of a certain musical instrument, as of a drum, cymbal, harp, flute, and so forth respectively. Many times she came and played and sang. With fondness for music, other desires began to be awakened. The king therefore commanded the maiden to retire at night with his son. Thus were his sexual passions excited and aroused. Then a harem with a thousand maidens could not gratify his lust. (Such is the story. Of its ethical value, nothing here need be said.)

The next story, on sinning through the nose, is familiar, in essentially the same form, in the West: Long ago there lived five hundred green pigeons in a flock. A sportsman tried in vain to catch them. He found a way at last. In the harvest season, he set his net beneath their tree and scattered in it a kind of fragrant rice. The green pigeons, smelling the rice, flew down to eat it and were caught in the net. Their leader told them not to struggle singly, but to wait and do as he might say. When the sportsman came to get them, the leader cried out: Now rise all together. They rose up suddenly all together, taking the net with them. On and on they flew for three successive days and nights. They then lit near a flock of white rats. The rats gnawed them free. (As a lesson on sinning through the sense of smell, this is rather inconsequential.)

It is related that Gautama said of sins of the tongue: "Out of the mouth come good words that lead to heaven, and evil words that lead to hell." The saying is compact and weighty and quite worthy of a great teacher; but the story told to illustrate the truth is even more inconsequential than the preceding. It may be dismissed with only a word. The tale is of a little child who ate some unwholesome fruit, had pains in the bowels, and died. Gautama never adorned his ship of state with that barnacle.

Of sinning through the sexual organs we have this: A hermit lived in a wilderness for twelve years. So great was his self-mastery and so abundant were his good deeds that he could fly (using his body for an aeroplane and his merit for a motor). One day he flew to the palace of a king. The king was hospitable, built for him a monastery in his own garden, and permitted him to eat of the food from the royal kitchen. At that time the king went forth with an army to repel an invader. After the king's departure no man dared to come to the palace. On a day the queen became very angry with the queenlets and after that none of them would come near her. She therefore prepared the hermit's food alone. One morning she rose early and, having prepared the food, lay down again near by to watch and wait. The hermit came, and



springing up she embraced him. She dragged him, half-resisting, to her bed and they sank down together. After that he rose and ate, but his power to fly had departed from him (the motor was out of repair). He must walk back to the monastery. All the king's ministers and the common people saw him and knew what must have happened. Some taunted him with having seduced the queen; some taunted the queen with having seduced the hermit. While this was going on the king returned. Hearing the evil report, he called and questioned the queen. She confessed, but taking all the blame upon herself, entreated that the hermit might be forgiven; then the king questioned the hermit, and he too confessed, but taking all the blame on himself, prayed that the queen might be forgiven. Then the king said, I too did wickedly in that I left it for women to prepare food for a hermit who should have nothing to do with women, and he took all the blame upon himself. The hermit again returned to his fasting and strict religious observances, and in after years recovered the power to fly. Then he preached saying: Keep yourselves under perfect control. Act as though you had neither eyes, ears, nose, mouth, nor sexual organs. Having so said, he went back again into his forest.

(An estimate of the Shan religion will be given in its proper place; but it is by no means easy to refrain from saying that the frequent, all too frequent, reference to the sexual relation, in the Shan books, must defeat, to some extent, the very purpose for which such warnings as this are supposed to have been given.)

In the Shan religious writings there is no subject which is so incessantly brought forward or occupies so large a space as the matter of offerings. Some whole books are given up to it, in connection with stories of a sort usually, but the stories serve the same purpose as the hats in which collections are taken. As we must pay some attention to the subject, it may as well come in here as anywhere. First of all let us have from one of the books a definition of offerings.

The giving of food, clothing or bedding to monks, or to beggars, or of food to animals, are all alike offerings; but

they are not all of the same value. An offering to a rahan (monk) who has the glory of duties well performed is equal in value to one thousand like offerings given to a probationer; an offering to a probationer is equal to one hundred of the same kind given to a beggar; but an offering given to an unfaithful rahan is equal in value only to a like offering given to a beggar. Again, if one gives to a beggar who has the glory of duties well performed, the merit will be most excellent. Giving to the great and holy is like working a fertile paddy field, with its abundant harvest; but giving to the faithless and unworthy is like working a sterile field which yields but little; there can be no excellent reward.

By this it appears that the value of an offering, in its meritorious results, depends in part upon the dignity and worth of the recipient, with no special reference to the measure of sacrifice on the part of the giver. The latter may enter into some degree, though not expressly mentioned here. The story is told of a poor woman who offered to Gautama all her possession, a narrow strip of cloth. On receiving it, to enhance her merit, he praised the gift, on account of its large measure of sacrifice, and prophesied, in substance, that the deed would become forever famous throughout the world. The Shans sometimes say that what are often called "prayer-poles," with their long streamers, are a memorial of the poor woman's sacrifice. Other tales are told in their books which might lead to a different conclusion. It is said that a rich man, in the days of Gautama, made and offered eighteen monasteries. In a business way, he turned to the Buddha and asked what profit he would get out of the investment. Gautama replied that the meritorious result would endure through one hundred thousand world cycles, that he would be a "king of kings" during seventy-seven such periods, and fill other high stations such as "prince of spirits." Then a poor man asked how long it would take for his little offerings (representing greater sacrifice) to equal in merit the offering of the rich man. The Buddha is represented as saying that as water, falling drop by drop, may fill a water-spout,

so in a myriad of world cycles his little offerings would equal in merit the rich man's gift of eighteen monasteries. Here merit is based on the market value of the gift alone. But here is a little tale which seems to teach the opposite again. A poor man, who eked out a miserable living by gathering firewood in the forest and by pounding out rice, deplored his unhappy lot and said in his heart, this is because, in all my past existences, I never made any religious offering. One day, on going to the forest for firewood, he came to a stream and sat down on its bank to rest. While sitting there he somewhat idly played in the sand and clay and made a tiny pagoda. Then with the same sand and clay he made four little images and set one of them on each of the four sides of the pagoda. Now gathering wild flowers he set them in the sand roundabout, and, filled with gladness, danced for joy. Having collected his armful of firewood, he went home. Soon thereafter he was taken sick and died. In subsequent existences, he was a prince of brahmas in seven of the brahma heavens and, dying, came to earth again as the son of a rich man. Hearing Gautama preach, he joined the monkish order, and dying again went straight to Nirvana. But this comes under the rule: merit according to the holiness of the recipient. The pagoda was a memorial of the Buddha himself. The poor woman's narrow strip of cloth was given to him. The thought, so prominent in Christian writings, that the moral value of a gift is determined largely by the measure of sacrifice, is not emphasized in the Shan books.

There is another element to come in here; for it is said that "the foundation of merit is in the mind," that is to say, in the desires and expectations of the giver. In the language of the books it reads this way: "He who gives desiring only to get for himself future happiness in the countries of spirits and of men, will attain no excellent reward. That is sensuous desire (*kama-hsanta*), and will lead to misery, and together they will bring destruction. Though the offering cost one hundred thousand viss of gold, the merit therefrom will be too light to bear the giver to the

happy state of spirits and of brahmas. The way to Nirvana is narrow and the hope of attaining that City of Gems is very small. One must be free from sensuous desire, the clinging to earthly things. In making offerings, desire and pray to pass beyond existence with its old age, sickness and death. Long not for the four abodes of punishment, the world of men, or for the spirit-heavens; they are the regions of the passions, like a revolving spinning-wheel with desire for its tough twisted cord."

In connection with this little homily, a story is told, in the customary Shan fashion, of the different motive or intention of two rich men in making their offerings. They are called by the nicknames of Hsu-Pingnya and Tu-Pingnya, which we may call, by interpretation, Glad-Wise and Sad-Wise. In making his offerings, Sad-Wise longed and prayed that, in coming existences, he might be a good spirit or good man, a rich man or a king. He longed for dainty food, sweet sleep, fame, happiness, and for a hundred thousand female attendants. He did not object to "the muchness."

Glad-Wise, in making his offerings, never cared for or thought of these things. He set his heart on Nirvana, and longed and prayed to attain that place of the peaceful mind. In due time, Sad-Wise died, and his spirit wended its way up Mt. Mero. There in a certain place he saw before him a gleaming glittering palace with fully one hundred thousand maidens waiting for a man. Drawing near, he assayed to ascend the steps—instantly the palace shook and swayed with a great noise, and Indra came down and told him to wait a while. After twenty of the years of men (twenty days in that first spirit-abode), Glad-Wise, "yielding to the impermanence of the human body," died and went swiftly up to the same spirit-land. Seeing his old friend, Sad-Wise, still waiting (and keeping the girls waiting too), he greeted him cordially and said, "Why are you waiting? Why did you not ascend?" Sad-Wise related his unhappy delay. Then said Glad-Wise, "Try again that I may see." Sad-Wise tried again, but the palace shook and swayed as before and all the maidens screamed from fright. "Ah, I

see," said Glad-Wise ; " you are not worthy to ascend, but I am "—and he ran nimbly up into the arms of the waiting maidens.

Out of a mass of stories and homilies, which teach one thing and another and something else and contradict what has been said and contradict the contradiction, I have been able to find five simple rules by which merit seems to be determined :—

(1) By the holiness of the recipient ; which shows that it takes more than cloth to make a decent clergy.

(2) By the good moral conduct of the giver ; which is a warning to hypocrites.

(3) By the market value of the gift ; which suggests that the monks know a good thing when they see it.

(4) By the measure of real sacrifice ; which respects genuine devotion.

(5) By freedom from "clinging to earthly things" ; which is sublimated-etherealized-transcendentalism ; by which one gets a palace of pure gold and a hundred thousand concubines, because one did not pray for them, nor want them, nor think of them ; which is paying virtue with vice ; which is tommy-rot.

The extent to which this matter of offerings is (doctrinally) carried may be seen in the well-known drama of Wethantara. A similar tale is told of Alengtama. Only a brief outline of it can be given here. He was the son of a king. His mother was endued with the graces of love, mercy, forbearance, and modesty. At his birth, the city resounded in an extraordinary manner with the noise of industry, the sound of musical instruments, and the songs of birds. The prediction was made that he would grow up to be a most liberal and holy man. Even when a child, he asked for a new suit of clothes every day in order that he might give the one he was wearing to the poor. While still quite young, on seeing the royal treasures, he told his father that they would all some day be spent to make a way to Nirvana. When he was fifteen or sixteen years of age, Hsuwana was given to him in marriage, and he became associated with his father in ruling the kingdom.

Within six months, after he became sole ruler, the royal treasures were all spent in offerings. There were left only five hundred pieces of silver. The prince of the (celestial) sakyas, assuming the form of a brahman, with a rosary in one hand and a white shell in the other, came asking for this money and got it. He left it in the care of the king, and the latter gave it away. The prince, either in the form of the same brahman or another, came and asked for the kingdom and got that too. Then the king and the queen left the palace hand in hand. Charging all not to weep for them, they ascended a chariot and rode away. The same prince, still incognito, came asking for the horses and chariot, and got them also. Now the royal pair proceed to the forest on foot. They subsist on such fruits as monkeys eat, and sleep, without bedding, under the trees, exposed to ravening beasts. Soon the creditor comes back asking for the five hundred pieces of silver (his other astral-self was at the palace jesting with the king's concubines). The king was now up a gum-tree. He had to confess that he had made an offering of the money entrusted to him. The creditor gave him a piece of his mind, saying in substance something like this: "You are a pretty pilgrim. You rob me of my money for merit. That is spurious piety. Get a wiggle on, and shell out the shekels." Fortunately, a rich man in need of slaves came by just then, and the king sold his wife and himself to him for 250 pieces of silver each. He paid the debt. He was set to watch one of the city gates. The rich man took the queen home with him, but she was so beautiful that his wife was green with jealousy. She banished the queen to a wretched hut and set her to feeding swine. She was then a mother-expectant, and in due time her babe was born. Though it was a dark and stormy night, the rich man's wife bade her take her babe instantly and go forth in the pouring rain to bury it without the city, for the babe was still-born. Holding her dead babe to her breast, the queen wandered from gate to gate, but everywhere met with abuse and was not allowed to proceed. At last she came to the gate where her husband was on guard (fast asleep). In her sorrow, she wept aloud.



BRICK STRUCTURE OVER SHAN WELL.





The whilom king was awakened and recognized her voice. Together they went forth to bury the dead babe. While digging its untimely grave they prayed that it might return to life again. The prince of the sakyas, no longer incognito, heard, came, and sprinkled the dead babe with holy water. It came to life at once. Then the great celestial told the king how he had tested his liberality, and gave back to him his kingdom and palace, his wealth and wife, and the little son.

(Such tales as this, of giving away or selling wife or children or both, as the case may be, for merit, do not appeal very favourably to Christian sentiment ; but Shan Buddhists try to justify the act on the ground that they always end well, and all share alike in the blissful results of the meritorious deed.)

Let us have now, for variety, a few of the rules for the guidance of the monks. In the Shan book from which they are taken very little regard was paid to logical arrangement. Here some changes are made, in the order, so as to bring them under separate topics, for the Western mind demands more method than the Shan books sometimes display. All the rules given in this one book (there are five such books specially for monks) need not be given here, but enough may be set down to show their characteristics.

No monk shall—

- give medicine to cause an abortion ; or
- give medicine to cause death ; or
- commission others to take life ; or
- dig a pit into which others may fall and die ; or
- cause death in any way ; or
- cut down any green plant, except a novitiate hacks it first and holds on.

No monk shall—

- indulge in “self-abuse,” even in his dreams ; or
- look on a woman with desire ; or
- touch a woman alive or dead ; or
- permit a woman to touch him ; or
- talk of the beauty of women ; or
- report what is said of women ; or

recite more than six sentences to a woman at any one time ; or  
 look at her legs when she makes her offering ; or  
 speak of any part of her body below her neck.

No monk shall—

dispute or come to blows ; nor  
 strike man or beast so as to draw blood or break  
 a bone ; nor  
 desire to oppress others ; nor  
 refuse, from anger, to eat food ; nor  
 strike himself from anger ; nor  
 from anger, destroy any article in his monastery ; nor  
 listen to others when they are quarrelling.

A monk may eat—

fish, meat, and other curries on the day on which they  
 are offered, not afterwards ;  
 mangoes, tamarind, sugar, and butter, mixed with  
 water, at any time, except at early dawn (when not  
 wanted) ;  
 honey, palm-sugar, and butter, at any hour, for seven  
 days, but not if mixed with rice ;  
 ginger, sugar, salt, slaked-lime, tobacco, cutch, betel,  
 myrobalan fruit, white jujube, nutmeg, cloves, and  
 spicy barks of trees, at any time (some of these are  
 chewed only).

A monk may not partake of—

medicine in which rice-water is an ingredient after  
 12 M. ;  
 the flesh of elephants, horses, lions, snakes, crabs,  
 dogs, cats, musk-rats, or of men ;  
 the flesh of any animal, if he saw it killed ;  
 nor of rice-spirit, nor palm-spirit, nor kam-saw  
 (fermented and intoxicating rice).

About robes :

If a robe is offered at an uncanonical time, it may not  
 be worn more than ten days ;  
 If a robe accidentally falls, it may not be picked up ;  
 If the offering of a robe is not announced beforehand,  
 it shall not be accepted ;

If a disciple is about to offer a robe at a certain monastery and monks of other monasteries see him, they shall not ask for it ;

If a monk's robe is rent, he may ask a nun to mend it, if she is his blood relation, otherwise not ;

If a monk puts on a new robe, he may not admire himself in a mirror.

A monk may not sleep—

on a place raised more than eight fingers high ; or

on a rug that more than ten men can sit on ; or

on the skin of a tiger, elephant, or horse ; or

in monastery or rest-house without first shutting the doors ; or

exchange his blanket with other monks, novitiates, or nuns.

Some rules on politeness :

If a disciple would offer a pagoda, monastery, image, or " prayer-pole " at a certain place, no monk may direct that it be offered elsewhere.

No monk may say, I can recite the Scriptures better than others.

If a visiting monk makes use of any articles in a monastery, he shall, on departing, mention to the resident monk that such articles have been returned.

When the older monks are teaching, the younger must respectfully listen.

A visiting monk may not call on another monk after 12 M., without first sending word.

In travelling, monks of higher rank should go ahead.

A monk may not—

boast of omniscience or of being better than other monks ; nor

ask for gifts, except from a robber ; nor

use gold, silver, copper, lead, or tin in any way ; nor

say that he has seen a lie, when he has not ; nor

kindle a fire or send another to kindle a fire at any time ; nor

scratch himself on a stone or stump when bathing ; nor

adorn himself with wreaths of flowers ; nor  
 buy anything in the market-place ; nor  
 wear ornaments or women's clothing ; nor  
 dance, sing, or play on musical instruments ; nor  
 wear sandals, except in muddy places ; nor  
 enter a house or village without wearing a belt ;  
 nor  
 leave his monastery during Lent, except to visit the  
 sick of his order ; nor  
 climb a tree, except in times of danger ; nor  
 ride on any vehicle, except when sick ; nor  
 receive goods to be stored away in his monastery ;  
 nor  
 use his rice-bowl for a commode.

In this connection, one reads with utter amazement that if a monk has committed even the most heinous of the sins mentioned, and afterwards observes the "poi-wat," he will be free from guilt. The poi-wat is the retirement of monks from their monasteries into temporary booths made of leaves or straw, usually in an open field, for six days and nights, in imitation of Gautama's retirement into the wilderness for six years ; but the poi-wat is a feast in which all the necessities of life, and often many of its luxuries, are most abundantly supplied. It is not fasting, but feasting. It is a Sunday-school picnic and the Glorious-Fourth rolled into one, with lemonade, tin-whistles and fire-crackers. This abortion discredits and disgraces and nullifies every really moral and sane prohibition in the whole bunch.

Some of the rules are sensible and wholesome ; some are nonsensical and unwholesome—better kept in the breach than in the observance. Hence the common Shan saying, "When there is a *Winè* in the village, the monks are detested," may reflect as severely on the good-sense of the villagers as upon the rectitude of the monks. "*Winè*," it is hardly needful to say, is this particular division of the Buddhist Scriptures.

Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tartar ; we have heard of that before. Scratch a Shan, lay or clerical, and you will find microbes of animalism. Under the Buddhistic

microscope differences appear, and so they are labelled: anger, greed, moral darkness, pride, sexual desire, and the like. In this the Shans are not peculiar. The diseases are contagious and the whole human family has been caught. According to the Shan books, even the monks are not immune. A monk is only a man, with a man's passions and temptations. He may be honest in intention and devout in practice, but like good St. Paul, in his confession (Rom. 7: 21), he finds "the law, that, to me who would do good, evil is present." Out of a mass of stories and homilies, and warnings and injunctions, I can take here only a few of the shorter ones, and must boil each of them down to a few paragraphs.

On anger, this may do: A certain king gave his goldsmith a costly gem to polish. On returning from the palace, the goldsmith met a hermit and invited him to his home. Putting the gem on a tray, he went down into his garden for onions and coriander to cook, with rice, for breakfast. When he was gone a pet parrot hopped down and swallowed the gem. The goldsmith, returning and finding that the gem had disappeared, accused the hermit of stealing it. The hermit denied it. Thereupon the goldsmith in great rage dragged him about and beat him with a stick till the room was bespattered with blood. The parrot excited flew down from his perch and the goldsmith accidentally stepped on and killed him. Then the hermit said, "Cut the bird open and you will find your gem." The goldsmith did so, and the gem was found. Then the goldsmith was alarmed and said, "Why did you not tell me?" The hermit answered, "If I had done so, you would have killed the parrot and I would have shared in your sin. For the beating, I lay no sin upon you." But Nature did. The goldsmith went to the kitchen to cook the breakfast, and the fire burst out and consumed both him and his dwelling. The hermit alone escaped.

On greed, this will do: A herdsman's cattle ran away. After searching for them for a long time in all directions, he found them at last by a pond. Being very hungry, he went to a monastery to get something to eat. The good monk gave him meat, fish and raised bread. In his heart he

thought : these monks have fine clothes, the best of food, and have nothing to do but stay in their monasteries and read books and say their prayers. So he asked that he might become a probationer. As such, he waited on his superior—brought water, swept the monastery, massaged the monk, cooked and set before him his food, and attended to all his duties as a novitiate. But, though he was well clad and grew fat, he was not satisfied. He wished to be a “man,” take a wife, and lay by property. He left the brotherhood and took the wife. He soon found himself as poor, wretched, ragged, thin and scraggy as he was before. To have made it out that he prospered, would have spoiled the story. He returned to the monastery as a probationer. In a little while, overcome by his passion for gain, he went back to his wife and to his toil. This occurred seven times. At the seventh time, returning one day from the forest with his load of firewood, he came suddenly into his wife’s sleeping apartment. Seeing her sprawling disenrobed upon her mat, his pious soul was filled with loathing. She was his own wife and that was sheer prudery. Catching up his yellow robe which had been laid away, he fled to the monastery for the last time. It is not said nor suggested nor hinted nor intimated that his wife had any rights in the matter whatever.\* She was like the one hundred thousand concubines previously mentioned who were not prayed for nor wanted nor thought of. Anything of that sort would have spoiled the warning too. It is all art. On reaching the monastery, his superior was at first unwilling to receive him, he had run away so often ; but after a little coaxing and wheedling, consented to do so. He was taken to Gautama. For the

\* It has often been said that women are as free and as highly respected in Buddhist as in Christian lands. Married women are not in the Shan religious literature, whatever may or may not be true in real life. Gautama himself abandoned his wife ; Wethantara gave his wife to a beggar ; Alengtama sold his to clear himself from the misappropriation of trust funds ; in this tale there is no intimation that the wife had either any freedom or rights to be respected ; a score and more of such cases could easily be cited from the Shan books. Apparently no responsibilities are incurred by marriage that a husband is bound to respect. Marriage is not an act of emancipation but a bill of sale. The wife is her husband’s chattel. The question of the right or the wrong of it does not enter here. This is simply a cold statement of incontrovertible facts.

probationer's edification, Gautama told him the following tale from a chapter in one of his own earlier lives :

"In ancient times, I was a poor man and supported myself by making a bean garden. Wishing to gain merit, I spent a part of the year in the forest as a hermit, returning at the proper season to raise my crop of beans. This I continued to do for seven years. On a day, I said to myself : ' I go and come from greed. I shall keep this up so long as I have beans and a hoe.' I therefore cast them into the river and cried out : ' Conquered, conquered.' The king of Benares, returning from war, heard the cry and thought it was a good omen. He called me and said, ' Why did you cry out : Conquered, conquered ? ' I replied, ' I did not cry out in thy praise, O king. The conquests of kings are of little worth. They take the life of man and beast. They fight for loot, and having fought, their enemies return again. I cried out because I had conquered greed, sexual desire, and every passion. Now I go to be a hermit indeed.' "

When the probationer heard this, his heart became pure and no more had he a desire to leave the brotherhood. Then the Buddha further instructed him, saying, " Do not sleep more than three nights in a house, nor climb trees, nor store up seed grain, nor raise buffaloes, cattle, or ponies, nor trade, nor practise astrology. If you do such things, your desire to leave the brotherhood and cleave to a wife and to property will return."

On the sexual passion, this little tale, one of many, is characteristic : At a certain place, the chief of the hunters went to the forest to shoot wild oxen and sambhur deer. During his absence his beautiful daughter remained at home. On a day, when she was bathing and adorning herself, a monk passed by. He saw her and wanted her. Returning to his monastery, he wrapped his robe about him and lying down rolled from side to side, grunting and groaning with sexual desire. For many days he ate nothing and moaned like a man sick with malarial fever. On returning from the forest, the hunter, as usual, went to the monastery to pay his respects to the monk. Seeing at once that the latter was in great distress he asked what the cause might be. The

monk answered : “ I am ashamed to tell you ; let me keep it to myself and die.” After much coaxing, he confessed to the hunter his love for the beautiful daughter. There was little that he could do, but he would carry the hunter’s meat, and render whatever assistance he could. The hunter was delighted, and sold his beautiful daughter at this price. She was but sixteen years of age, and the monk was sixty. She despised him in her heart. In due time a little son was born to them. Swaying his little cradle, she often sang :

“ Sleep, sleep, little boy,  
Sleep without a sigh ;  
But ’twould give your mammy joy  
Should your daddy die.”

Daily he returned at evening weary and laden with the meat, and daily he heard his young wife crooning over the cradle and singing words of ridicule and abuse :

“ Sleep, sleep, little one ;  
See not mammy cry.  
Daddy is a rummy one—  
Would that he might die.”

The translation is free, but it gives the sense all right. Angry and grieved beyond measure, the ex-monk left his wife and child, and rushed back to the brotherhood. He met the Buddha, who asked him if the report was true that he had taken a wife and become a hunter. He confessed and pleaded to be received back again into the order. Gautama preached to him. He became a rahanda. In seven days he died and attained Nirvana.

Brevity is the soul of wit. Many selections taken from various parts of the Shan religious literature must be omitted. They are neither better nor worse than the samples already given. I must hasten on to the end of this section. But there is one more little tale which I wish to tell. It is taken from a book called *The Mirror*, and is, I think, one of the best in all the Shan books. There is one other, that I have seen, which compares favourably with it. It is of Gautama (in an earlier life) begging in his childhood for his poor, blind, old mother. Coming home, soiled



with mud and torn and bleeding from savage dogs, he would lay the food before his mother and say : " Eat it all, dear mother, and be not quickly satisfied." Never would he taste of it till his mother had eaten. Indra saw, marvelled, and raised him to the throne.

Now our last story : Ages ago, in the land of Kokkula, there lived in a certain village a rich man. He had many buffaloes and cattle in his pasture, and in his treasure-house much silver and gold. The king, hearing that the Buddha had come to a neighbouring place, and wishing to see him, called all his able-bodied people to go with him, leaving in this village only the aged and the children, with servants to look after them.

In another part of the country there lived a very wicked robber chief who, on hearing that the king and the able-bodied had gone, called his band together to rob the village. Sawtika, the rich man, too old to go with the king, heard that the robbers were coming and commanded his servants to arm themselves with bows and spears and go forth to drive the marauding band away. His little daughter, Sammoktasa, hearing the command given, thought of a better way. Coming to her father she said, " Father, you have great riches in buffaloes, cattle, horses, mules, silver, gold, and precious gems. Besides this, there are with you many old men and women and children. You have much to lose. The robbers have nothing to lose and much to gain—and are as fierce as wasps. Your servants cannot drive them away. Let me therefore go and conquer them with kindness. If they are pleased, they may go away, for men and angels like to hear sweet words. No one drives a buffalo by scolding, but gently leads him with a string and coaxes him on ; so may I do with the robbers."

The aged Sawtika saw the wisdom of her words and said, " It is well. Go, my child, with your maidens, and meet the robbers. Offer them water to drink. They will be thirsty. And speak kind words to them." The maidens filled their water jars with water, fresh and cool from the well, and carrying them on their heads went forth from the village. They found the robbers resting in a shady grove of mango

trees. Approaching the robber-chief, Sammoktasa said, in words of polite greeting: "Whence have you come? and what do you, with all these good men, seek? Take a little water, please, for you must be thirsty." Thus gently did she speak to him.

The chief, thinking in his heart that the little lady mistook them all for good men, did not want to tell her that they had come to rob her father and the whole village. So he, dissembling, said, "My little lady, the king and his people have gone to see the great Buddha; we too were going with them; but coming too late we camped here. To-morrow we will go on to hear the golden words of the great teacher."

Sammoktasa, undeceived, put her water jar on her head again and said, "It is very good to go and thus acquire merit; but let me help you, for you are all weary and hungry, that I too may share by hospitality the blessing that will come upon you." Receiving graciously the thanks of the robber-chief, she returned to her father who had already prepared for her coming. In a few moments, Sammoktasa, with her companions, was on her way back to the robbers, taking with her four carts loaded with rice, fish, onions, pumpkins, salt, tea, and tobacco. With their own hands they divided the food among the robbers, saying as they did so, "By using our gift you will increase our merit in all worlds to come." As the robbers were eating, they heard the sound of drums—bur-r-r, bur-r-r—from behind the village, where old Sawtika had stationed a few servants. The chief asked, "What is that?" and the little lady answered, as she had been instructed to do: "O, that is only the sepoys whom the king left to protect the village during the absence of the able-bodied." Then with many kind words she returned with her maidens and the empty carts to the village. As soon as she was gone, the chief said to his followers, "It would be cruel to attack the village after all this kindness; neither are we able to fight against the king's police" (for he thought that they were really there). "Let us go," said he, "and seek booty elsewhere."

Thus it was that one little girl by her kindness overcame a band of robbers and saved a whole village from pillage and

its people from slaughter. This teaches that soft words are better than swords and kind acts than armies. There is nothing so great as gentleness and hospitality. (Casuists may quibble over the act of deception, but the ethical quality of this little tale is, on the whole, right and noble.)

We may return now to the Shan book from which our first selection was taken and see what it says of the journey to Nirvana, and of Nirvana itself.

The three regions where men and spirits endure sorrow are like the encampments on a long journey, wending one's weary way through valleys and over mountains. To reach these abodes it is not necessary to pray or to give much, for all must go. It is as when one goes, with a bullock caravan, to trade in a far country, and is gone many years from home for which one daily longs.

Indeed, we are rather like the bullocks that carry the heavy loads, going on and on without rest. Until they reach the place of encampment, their master beats them and scolds them abusively. Though their loads are taken off and they rest for the night, on the morrow the heavy burdens are put on their backs again and they are compelled to toil for another day. Thus day by day they march on their long and weary journey. The encampments are the world of men and the spirit abodes where we rest for a night only; only to be driven on again bearing our heavy burdens. Why should we pray for it? It is but for a night where one rests for a little while. Though one become a prince or a princess among the spirits in the highest regions, one will come to the end of that life, change one's form and depart. One dwells there but for a short time, and dies again. There many people rest for a short time, but after all, it is like the resting-place of the weary oxen that were goaded on the next day with their heavy burdens. Even if one come to the abodes of the brahmas, they too are but brief resting-places on the same long and suffering journey. Why should one desire to pray for hell, the earth, the spirit abodes, or for the brahma heavens, mere camping places for a night? As the oxen are driven on day after day till they become thin and only skin and

bones remain, so are we on the long wearying journey of our ever-changing existence. It is said that it is meritorious to desire and to pray for the abodes of the spirits and of the brahmas, because, they say, it is like coming home where the oxen are unloaded and rest. There, they say, we are like oxen that are comfortable in their yards. In the morning they go out to graze, and, if thirsty, go to the clear streams to drink. At evening they come home to sleep. The thin ones get fat, eating the tender elephant grass which springs up after the early rains. But, remember, when the rainy season is over, the oxen are made to toil again. Again through the valleys and over the mountains they are driven. Again they endure weariness and abuse and pain.

Thus the master, Karma, loads us with heavy loads, drives us and scolds us. This master is truly not another, but is our own mind (disposition)—the desiring and the praying to be good men and to live in a palace of gold and gems, and to enjoy sensuous bliss; these become the master who loads us with heavy burdens. But he who desires and prays for Nirvana, and for Nirvana only, is like a pack peddler who returns from trading, lays down his heavy pack altogether and forever, and remains at home in happiness and peace.

As to the famous country of Nirvana, the high place: if one arrive there, one's miseries come to an end. One does not need to come back again. One does not need to have the misery of being born again from a mother's womb. One does not need to be bitterly distressed and die. One does not need to weep and moan at all. The cord of life breaks not, and there is no death. One does not need to return and fall into hell, the world of sorrows. When one reaches Nirvana, hostile dangers and sufferings cease. There, there are happiness and peace. There no evils and no dangers come. There one *is master of one's self, a self the very best indeed.*\*

More excellent than the world of men, more excellent than the abodes of spirits, is Nirvana. Nirvana is millions

\* The text here reads: "*pín sao pōng hang nūng, hking kao an li tawn te.*"

of times better than our earthly home, however full of transient joys. If one does not long and pray for it, one will never get it—for the journey is long.

The foregoing description of Nirvana gives a large angle for individual, conscious and masterful existence. This is an angle that cannot be made to coincide with the expressed opinions of those who say that Nirvana is utter and absolute annihilation, leaving not even an imaginary point from which any line can be drawn at all. This latter view is finely put by Lanier, and the two views may be compared :

“ So Buddha, beautiful, I pardon thee  
 That all the All thou hadst for needy man  
 Was Nothing, and thy Best of being was  
 But not to be . . . ”

If that is all that the Buddha had “for needy man,” it is evident that many Shans have outgrown the original article. A religion of death and annihilation, whether it be Eastern Buddhism or Western Positivism, is not a religion of peace and joy, and cannot satisfy the soul’s hopes and aspirations—even the Shans have found that out.

Who has not read with delight “Coplas de Manrique”? Yet this Christian poet, debarring the transmigrations, the long and painful journey, has expressed in only a slightly more beautiful way the very thought of the Shan writer :

“ Our cradle is the starting place,  
 Life is the running of the race,  
 We reach the goal  
 When, in the mansions of the blest,  
 Death leaves to its eternal rest  
 The weary soul.”—*Longfellow’s Translation.*

The whole sad story of life, and its end, whether sad or otherwise, is often summed up in short Kamma-htans, easy doctrinal rhymes that may be readily committed to memory. Two of these may be sufficient, as samples :

“ Here is sorrow, sickness, death ;  
 I must vanish as my breath.  
 All I eat from day to day  
 Feeds a form that must decay.

Subjects, with their king and queen,  
 In abodes of Death are seen.  
 That dread Prince may come for me ;  
 From his power no man can flee.  
 He my soul will surely take,  
 When with pain my heart doth break.  
 None escapes—we follow all,  
 Nor even know when he may call.  
 Ah, this moment, it may be,  
 His messenger may call for me.  
 Saddest words of truth declare,  
 Death is present everywhere.  
 If his eye on me remain,  
 Then I grunt and groan in pain.  
 'Neath the City of the Blest  
 I can find no place of rest.  
 Thus I chant, for self alone,  
 My requiem in monotone."

This is lugubrious, but scarcely more so than the "Dance of Death" by Rabbi Santo de Carrion; and both are out-classed by the following, which is sufficiently doleful, dismal and gloomy for the most pessimistic of Buddhists :

"We live and die and are reborn ;  
 A moment here, and then are gone.  
 A father of the ancient years  
 Long after in a son appears.  
 No freedom from the ills that spring  
 On us in life, they always cling.  
 In every age by fate we bear  
 Of grievous ills each one his share.  
 The Prince of Death his victim sees ;  
 He reaches up his game to seize.  
 He drags it down—avails no plea,  
 As : Pity, Death ; O, don't take me.  
 Be it at night or in the morn,  
 We hang our heads and follow on.  
 Together come our friends to cry  
 Until their throats are sore and dry.  
 They take the corpse without in haste ;  
 In funeral no time they waste.  
 We vanish all and none can see  
 In next estate what he may be.  
 A mother doth her bed prepare ;  
 In sorrow she a babe doth bear.  
 In body, mind, in every way,  
 It larger grows from day to day.

She hopes, in after years, that he  
His aged parents' stay may be.  
But worm may bore, and blight may rust,  
The fruit may fall and turn to dust.  
Some die of fever, some of pox,  
Some in their youth, some in gray shocks.  
The ills that get us in a fix,  
If counted all, are ninety-six."

Notwithstanding we have been warned not to desire existences in hell, or on this earth, or in the abodes of spirits, and that we should pray only for Nirvana, few are the Shans who either wish or expect to get out of the "fix" too quickly. They often express the hope and utter the prayer that they may continue going up and down through transmigratory existence until the next Buddha shall come. That will be some twenty-five hundred years hence, which is in the comparatively near future. They also hope and pray that they may be then reborn as men to see him and to live in the bliss of that coming age. The last devout wish expressed in the Burmese inscription at Bodh-Gaya is thoroughly characteristic: "May I become a disciple of *Metteya*, the Coming Buddha." \*

Many years ago, I sat in a monastery in Möng-mao, having a friendly chat with the monk. He tried to describe to me the peace and plenty, the health and happiness, of that good time coming by and by. Stretching out and waving his long thin arm, he said: "The mountains shall be levelled, and the world shall become one vast plain; there shall be rice fields and gardens everywhere; there shall be no anger, no avarice, no adulteries, no sin of any kind; there shall be only mercy and kindness in a world of beauty and of love."

I had not then read, but later I read a similar description of that golden age in one of the Shan books. Apart from some Shan over-elaboration, exaggeration, and grotesquenesses, it was a delightful picture of a beautiful age. Of that good time, Mr. Bowring writes:

"The fifth (Buddha) is to appear under the name of Phra Metrai (Arimadeya), and is destined to rule for eighty

\* *Burmese Sketches*, p. 93.

thousand years. He is to introduce the golden age. Wars, diseases, poverty, and crime are to cease; the earth is to produce fruits without cultivation, and there will be no longer any excesses of cold or heat. This Buddha will plant at every angle of every town the *Kamaphruk* tree (also called *Pades'a*) which will produce whatever is an object of desire,—gold, silver, rich garments, luscious foods and drinks. Eighty-four thousand vast cities will suddenly spring into existence. Ferocious animals will all become tame; and if a seed be dropped, it will produce more fruit than can be estimated.”\* That is not half-bad, and one is almost reminded of the inspired words of the rapt and seraphic seer: “Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing; and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.”

The foregoing, and such, is the pabulum on which the religious thought and feeling of the Shans are fed. No good Buddhist can find fault with the breakfast here spread before him. It all comes from his own kitchen, and has been served up with the silence and decorum of a well trained servant.

\* Bowring, p. 305.



## CHRISTIANITY AND ANIMISTIC BUDDHISM.

IN writing of the relation of Christianity to Animistic-Buddhism (or the reverse), there is at least one thing on which all are agreed. All agree that it should be done with a liberal mind, with a sane judgment, and in a generous spirit. In treating such subjects as racial or linguistic affinities one may, without impropriety and without hurting anybody's feelings, jest at facts and poke fun at fancies ; but one may not do so in speaking of another man's religion. It matters not whether he be a Secularist, or Positivist, or Agnostic, or Atheist, or Buddhist, or Muhammedan, or Catholic, or Protestant, or Pilgrim's Progress ; it matters not whether he be saintly, or sanctimonious, or sacrilegious, or only salacious—he is bound to be mighty opinionated when it comes to religion and to regard his religious opinions as the most sacred and untouchable things in his waist-coat pocket. He is right. They are the most sacred. The opinions may be superstitions. They may be puerilities. They may be grotesquenesses. Never mind. They are his own, and the best things among all his possessions.

Of course it may be said that nine-tenths of all religions is pure sentiment. That is true too. But just because it is *pure* sentiment it is the best robe any man ever wore, and all decent men are proud of it and ought to be. In comparison with it, every other sentiment is but the filthy clout of an Indian fakir. A writer who would cast reproaches on any man's religion must himself be lacking in the tenderer feelings of human kindness and the finer sensibilities of Christian courtesy. There is always much more to be lost than gained by reproaches, and much more to be gained than lost by generosity. Still, as between Christianity and Animistic-Buddhism, or between Animistic-Buddhism and

Christianity, it may be said that probably no Buddhist could, from his own point of view, give a just and adequate interpretation of St. John's Gospel ; neither can a Christian, simply from the fact that he is one, give an honest interpretation of a Buddhist doctrinal writing that would, in all respects, please a Buddhist. The philosophical presuppositions and the standard of moral values are different in the two cases. No man is a mere sensitized photographic plate "taking" the reflected image of a subject. The best that any man can do is to be sincere, honest and kind. Fortunately, I can confine my remarks here very largely to statements of fact, without expressing personal opinions, which nobody wants.

Man, as a social being, assumes that there are distinctions between good and evil, between right and wrong. The proof of the reality of such distinctions may be left to social ethics. In a similar way, a Christian assumes the existence of God, but the proof must here be left to theology. The Shans, as animists, make no such assumption. They have not even a name for God as Supreme, in the Christian sense. As spirit-worshippers they apparently had in the past, and still have, one spirit who is regarded by them as above all others in station and power. A legend from Tongking speaks of a spirit called Ti-hkam, the golden (glorious) Ti, who is doubtless no other than the Chinese Shang Ti. Whether the pre-Buddhist Shans in their early home in China, along with the Chinese, worshipped this Supreme Ruler, or whether it is a late importation among the Tongking Shans, is uncertain ; in either case he is a Chinese conception.\*

Then there was Ling-lawn, the god of thunder, a sky-god passionate but not vindictive exactly, for all his outbursts of anger were against sin, as unrighteousness in the dealings of man with man, or lack of reverence and worship of the gods. In these days of imported Buddhism, the name appears only in the older literature and may soon be forgotten. The Shans say that he is the same as "Hkun

\* So far as my knowledge goes, this name does not occur in the Shan Buddhist literature, and is certainly unknown by the Shans of Burma.

Sakya,"\* the lord of the spirits of the lower spirit heaven, introduced to the Shans through Burman Buddhism.

According to the many tales told of the latter, he certainly has the same character as the former and cuts up the same capers.

Ingta (Indra) is another of these borrowed gods. In the Ahom legend of creation, he is pictured as a World-Sovereign, but that is an Indian conception and is not now held by any of the Buddhist Shans. Ingta seems now to be regarded as simply another name for "Hkun Sak-kyā" (*alias* Ling-lawn). Of him the following tale is characteristic: In northern Burma there is a sheet of water called "Ingta's Lake." It was not always there. Many years ago, on that site, there was a Shan village of some four or five hundred houses. The people were fishermen. One day they went to the neighbouring river to catch fish. They cast a net and caught a very large fish, enough for a generous slice for everybody. They gave to each household a share (apparently a common custom among hunters and fishermen of former times)—except to one family, a widow and her little son. They were ignored because of their extreme poverty. That night Ingta gave the widow a dream, saying, "The river is mine; the fish also are mine. I am angry with this people because they did not give you your portion. I shall punish them by causing this place to sink and become a large lake. In five days (the old Shan week) it shall come to pass. All the people who do not run away shall be drowned."

In the morning, bright and early, the widow went to the village headman and told him her dream. She was laughed at and called crazy. Before the five days were passed, she took her little son, and a few household articles, and fled to the mountain. She looked back just in time to see the village sink and streams of water rush in from every side. All the villagers were drowned. In their next life, some became one thing and some another: turtles, fish, eels, crabs, shrimps, and all sorts of water animals. Going to the lake, one may still see their children's children swimming about in the

\* The Shans commonly spell this name "*Sak-kyā*."

water as living witnesses to the truthfulness of the tale. As spirit-worshippers, the Shans have no higher conception than this of a Supreme God.

But in these Buddhistical times all high-born spirits have to take a back seat, and Gautama, the Peripatetic of Kappilawut (Kappilavastu), has been enthroned as the Supreme Being. To him is ascribed infinite power, of wisdom in particular, an attribute of Deity. Even he has attained Nirvana (whatever that may be) and to all intents and purposes exists only as he is enshrined in his images and lives in his law, a Supreme God fashioned from intangible but pious dreams.

Worship of the spirits of departed ancestors, which may once have been common among the Shans, and of which traces are still left, has now taken a subordinate place. Nature-spirits of all sorts and conditions have now the most powerful hold upon the superstitions of the people: spirits of the cloudy sky, of rivers, of trees, of disease, and the like, these Buddhism has not displaced. The two systems have coalesced and formed a religious amalgam.

The statement often made that spirit-worship is wholly traditional and based on fear is certainly too strong, as applied to the Shans. It needs some qualifications; for some of the spirits are regarded as good guardian spirits, to whom prayers are made in times of individual distress or of public disaster. But bad spirits seem to outnumber the good and fear is often dominant. Or it may be that good spirits, like good men, are the more numerous but are the less notorious. Fear is shown in such cases as these: A few years ago that dread disease, the "plague," broke out in the village of Kyauk-me. Some fifteen miles further up the railway line was the larger town of Hsipaw. Strenuous efforts were made to keep the "plague-spirit" from entering the town. One day the writer saw a group of Shans beside the railway, with a pop-gun which they called "a small cannon," loaded and pointed in the direction of the infected village. Surmising what was up, he greeted the leader of the band cheerfully with the query, "Are you going to frighten away the plague-spirit?" The spirit-physician, a young man who had been educated in a Wesleyan Methodist

school, suddenly lost faith in his prescription, or decided to apply "absent treatment" to the "claim"—at all events, he directed his nurses to carry away the pop-gun without firing a shot. He might very appropriately have sung, as he went, a line from one of the hymns he had learned in the Mission school: "A *charge* to keep I have."

There was once a similar case in Mawk-mai (Southern Shan States). When cholera broke out in the village, the people sprinkled their houses with holy water (water over which a monk had recited pious texts), and hung up thorny creepers over their doors and windows, to keep out the "cholera-spirit." Westward from Hsipaw town there is a small stream the water of which is used by the farmers in irrigating their rice fields. Every year an offering of a bullock is made to "the spirit of the dam" before the water is used; if this were not done, the spirit might get on his ear and cause the dam to break or assume the form of a leopard or tiger and devour some of the people. All this is based on fear, and little else.

Every religion, and every form of religion, have been handed down, changed or unchanged, from earlier times. In this sense at least spirit-worship is traditional; but, though traditional, it is very real to the Shans—as real as belief in ghosts, witches, and astrology once was in Europe (with traces of it still left in spots). Offerings to such spirits are made usually to avert some form of evil, and not for religious consolation or to save from sin. The Shans seem to regard these spirits much in the same light as they once regarded the hostile hill tribes (to whom in western China, in some instances, blackmail is still paid). The latter, however, were tangible perils and hence less to be feared. If an analogy is wanted, it may be found in the demons of the Jews. Occasionally offerings are made to good spirits in anticipation of some temporal benefit.

There is little in the animistic beliefs and practices of the Shans that stands in the way of their conversion to Christianity; not because the two are alike, but because there is so little in the former worth retaining. Still it is not easy to rid the convert of his animistic notions; some of

these may be sloughed off in the process of conversion, but others cling and can be only gradually outgrown. There are some intellectual ideas that stand in the way ; but it is hard to tell, in some instances, whether they belong to Animism or to Buddhism. The latter presents many difficulties. Among these are the idea of transmigration, and the settled conviction that the present moral order, and human conditions in all respects, are due to moral deeds done in some previous life. With this goes the cognate idea that salvation is wholly wrought out by the individual, and is quite as much a deliverance from physical ills as from sinful inclinations. There is a social hindrance, if not to conversion, at least to public identification with the followers of the Christian faith. It is exceedingly hard for the Shans, as a rule, to break away from the religious habits of their families, and from the whole network of social and religious practices to which they have all their life been accustomed. They can no longer associate even with their dearest friends, many of their religious customs, in their worship and pious festivities of whatever kind, except to show good-will and sympathy, as in funerals, when their act will not be misunderstood. The religious change is often regarded by their kindred as not only unfaithfulness to the religion of the family, but as disloyalty to the people. The convert goes over alike to an alien religion and to a foreign race.

When one lights a lamp it is not necessary to frighten away darkness by ugly words. Neither will silly fancies (witchcraft, ghosts, charms, incantations, fortune-telling, and much more of the same class) be overcome by scolding. When such fancies go, they will fade away before the light of Western science and of positive Christian teaching. For this purpose there is no agency to compare with Christian schools in which the children, taken young, unconsciously outgrow such notions, in large measure, without any hostile attack.

Other customs and characteristics are positively helpful : intellectual sanction of moral law, belief in personal accountability, faith in a life to come, prayer to great and powerful spirits, the principle of sacrifice seen in offerings

to idols and to monks, a fairly high conception of social obligation at least to the members of one's own family—all these and many more are stepping-stones to clearer light and to higher faith. The Christian teacher can use them as signboards pointing toward the new and better Commonwealth called "The City of God."

As to the question whether the Animistic-Buddhism of the Shans presents points of contact between, or is a preparation for, Christianity, the opinions of Christians may differ as widely as their views of revealed truth. Some twenty odd years ago, the writer heard an old missionary of large ability, a man who could not be accused of being intentionally ungenerous or unfair, say that he regarded Buddhism as "The devil's consummate counterfeit of Christianity." The statement surprised the younger missionary at the time, and his astonishment has grown with the passing of the years and with larger knowledge of Buddhism than he then possessed. This attitude of mind was widely characteristic at that time, not only of the earlier missionaries but of Christians in general, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, and was due to their conception of God's method of revelation. They were wont to confine revealed truth too exclusively to the records given in the Christian scriptures. More recently there has been a tendency to give a larger place to the universal light of Christ who lightens every man. Now the universal religious consciousness is coming to its own. Much that is helpful in Animistic-Buddhism may be found by taking this wider view of God's method of revelation. Even from a strictly Biblical point of view, it is not necessary to hold that God remained silent for inconceivable ages, then spoke to a single and comparatively small people, only to close his hallowed lips again, like a sphinx, to remain silent for ever. Every religion is and must be a certain preparation for Christianity, and must present certain points of contact with Christianity from the fact that it is a religion at all; a species, however much arrested in development, of the same genus. It is not necessary to assume that such preparation and such points of contact were conscious and of intention

on the part of the devotees of the various religions, but it is difficult to evade the assumption that they were so in the mind and purpose of God.

The Shans as Buddhists and as Animists recognize no Supreme God, in the Christian sense ; but there is belief in the God-like, as seen in the practical apotheosis of Gautama, to whom are ascribed infinite wisdom and power. As there is no doctrine of the Fatherhood of God, so there can be none of the Brotherhood of man. One of the gravest charges ever brought against Buddhism, whether it be Shan Buddhism or any other form of it, is the impulse it seems to give to self-seeking, which has made co-operation for the social welfare more conspicuous for its absence than for its presence. In like manner there is little regard for the wellbeing of coming generations. A Shan Buddhist, with great candour, has recently said : "Buddhists look out for themselves ; Christians, for coming generations." He said that to me and as it was not marked "private and confidential," there can be no impropriety in my repeating it. But, all Buddhists are not selfish, neither are all Christians generous. There are exceptions on both sides. Here is one : During the past hot-season (1913), there was a fire in Pyaung-kaung, a small village on the Mandalay-Lashio railway. Within a few moments sixteen bamboo and thatch houses went up in smoke. The ashes had not time to get cold before the villagers had contributed to the houseless, food, clothing, blankets, seed-grain, bamboo and thatch for new houses, and a little hard cash to each householder. Let us believe that that was done sympathetically and gladly—though it is said that the local Shan official commanded them to do it and they dared not disobey. It takes grace to give cheerfully when one can't help it. The official himself may not have been moved by any tender motive, for he knew that, without help, some of those families might have to forage in greener pastures, with loss to his revenue. His eye may have been on his cash box. Still, as an exception, it looks good and sounds well.

Shan Buddhism, though it presents no clear cut conception of personal immortality, gropes after it, as seen in the



story of Nirvana and the journey thither. As to creation (for it is necessary to pass quickly from one topic to another), creative power is ascribed to a great spirit—though the act of creation is contradictory to the central Buddhistic doctrine of Karma. The statement is clear that the origin of existence is unrevealed. Hence acts of creation are not *ex nihilo*, but rather acts of transformation. What appears to be an exception to this claim, found in the Ahom legend of creation, is an exception only in appearance, for it is northern Buddhism and has nothing to do with the Animistic-Buddhism of the Shans of Burma.

If consciousness of sin and desire to escape from it, and particularly from its consequences, may be regarded as a point of contact, the Shans certainly have that, but it is sin in the nature and in the transgression of impersonal law that is meant. It is better, however, to seek points of contact and preparation, not in particular ideas and customs, but in the wide basis of religious purpose and aspiration. If there were no points of contact and no preparation, there would be no ground of appeal and conversion would be practically impossible.

According to Shan Buddhism, and perhaps to all Buddhism, the highest moral state is attainable only by renunciation of the world and retirement to the seclusion of a monastery to live a life of pious repose; free from fuss and bustle, "to enswathe one's self," as a monk once expressed it, "in an atmosphere of pity." There is a mystical element in this of value, no doubt; but it differs from the strong and manly plunge of Christ-like sympathy and helpfulness into the sea of human need and want.

In biology there is a fundamental difference between the struggle of the individual for its own life and the struggle of the individual for the life of others. Throughout God's whole creation, from top to bottom, there is one condition of progress, one hope of the future, one law of life that is absolutely supreme, and that is the law of the sacrifice of self. In human relationships it finds its highest expression; but one may search up and down the pages of many Shan religious books for a clear strong word in regard to it—and

search in vain. Sometimes one may find a word about kindness, but often that word too drivels down to mere pity, to mere infantile harmlessness. Often one may find a word about offerings, even of one's own flesh, but it is always for merit, for personal gain, which in its very nature violates this sacrificial law.\*

In Christianity, sympathy and helpfulness spring, of course, from the great truth of God's fatherhood, of his love and care of his children; this appeals readily to the Shans. A Shan once said, "I was unspeakably glad when I learned that God was alive and cared for me." This stands in striking contrast to the teaching concerning a dead Gautama, or concerning the great spirits who live in self-centred retirement from the world. It is seen to be something more than a "Hkun Sakkyā" of the spirit abodes seldom visiting the world of men, except to punish the wicked by thunderbolt and earthquake for their sins. In speaking of the Laos, Dr. Dodd says, "Deliverance from demons appeals soonest, perhaps, of all things in the Christian life." To many Shans, the teaching that God is more powerful than all the hosts of evil spirits and can save from their tyranny ought to be attractive, and particularly to the Laos among whom the demons seem to be uncommonly active.

Not at first, but later, when a Shan has come to understand in some measure the Cross of Christ, with its promise of forgiveness, deliverance from the power as well as the penalty of sin, the atonement has in it an unparalleled power of appeal. This doctrine so cuts across the whole presumption and content of Karma that a Shan, as a rule, is

\* Buddhists may regard this statement as ungenerous and unkind, perhaps as untrue and unfair; but after long and sympathetic study of Shan Buddhism, common honesty compels me to make it, if anything is to be said about it at all.

Mr. Taw Sein Ko writes: "I think the statement is quite correct. Neither in Burmese nor in Shan is there any exact equivalent of the expression "self-sacrifice," which is the negation of "personal gain," the dominant note of Buddhism. I look upon Buddhism as one of the anterior phases of religious development (when the instinct of self-preservation was stronger), and as such, the idea of "self-sacrifice," in the Christian sense, is quite foreign to it. All the offerings made by Buddhists are, in a sense, "investments in a spiritual bank," to be drawn and enjoyed in the life that is beyond the grave."

long in coming to apprehend it. Judging from the confessions of converts, it may be safely said, however strong the power of appeal in other gospel truths, that it is the doctrine of the atonement, more than all others combined, that has led Shans to break away from the religion of their fathers and to take their stand for Christ. Being lifted up from the earth, Christ is drawing all men unto himself. The doctrine of the Cross may offend when the mere physical aspects of the crucifixion are unduly dwelt upon, but when the doctrine of the atonement is presented as a Life of Sacrifice, the supreme manifestation of the Father's love to sinful man, it stirs the heart of the Shan that grasps it as no other doctrine can.

As to Christian conduct: though it may be true that the occasional inconsistent life of some convert is a deterrent from accepting the Christian faith, it is also true that the consistent life of many more presents a powerful argument on the other side. Naturally, as human nature is, the slip of one may bring disrepute upon many. As an instance of this, the following incident may be cited. In a certain place in Burma there is a Christian school which has been established for many years. During all its history only one boy, professing to be a Christian, was ever known to steal and to get into serious trouble thereby. The non-Christian community made more talk over that regrettable incident than it was ever known to make over the honest manly life of the many scores of boys who had received their training there.

The question is sometimes asked: Are Buddhists dissatisfied with their religion? The Shans are not. Occasionally a man may be found to enter some such a plaint as this: "It is hard to die and not know what one may be in the life to come (ghost, animal, man, or spirit), or to what state of happiness or misery he may attain." But on the whole, they are well satisfied. Indeed, they think that Buddhism is the best religion in the world—and their religion is all Buddhism to them, for they fail to distinguish therefrom their animistic ideas and practices. In particular do they point out the moral precepts of the Buddha,

such as "Thou shall not steal." They regard the injunction, not to take life, as more humane than the Christian custom of taking the life of animals even for food; but with charming *naïvetè* their pious monks have a predilection for pork, and other meat curries, and eat them whenever offered, which is usually once a day. Few are the exceptions to this rule among the Shans. There is one small sect which is said to be strictly vegetarian.

There is much of course in the Animistic-Buddhism to commend. This should be generously and gratefully acknowledged. To pick out the worst of one religion and compare it with the best in another can never make a golden balance. The moral code of Buddhism, as has often been pointed out, is high and noble. It is true that it is not lived up to—not even perhaps to the same degree that the Christian code is; but, when one may find in Christian lands small towns "with a half-dozen churches and two or three score of saloons, and a whole district with red lights as signs of danger, together with the unutterable wrongs of our industrial system, it does not behove one to throw stones injudiciously and indiscriminately. Even if our moral code were lived up to, that would not be an excuse for stone-throwing.

There are a few Christian doctrines which awaken opposition, such as: Evil in a world created by a good God; the alleged miraculous birth of Jesus; vicarious suffering; and a bodily resurrection. "Why," we are asked, "did an absolutely good God create mosquitoes?" This is the way in which the first of these objections is sometimes put. It cannot be treated as a frivolous jibe; back of it there is a real sense of incompatibility. Neither does Christianity give any adequate explanation of what seems, so far as this life is concerned, to be unmerited suffering. We may believe in the disciplinary value of suffering. We may believe with Pauline faith that all things shall ultimately work together for good to those that love God and do righteously. But this still leaves the problem of apparently unmerited suffering in a cloud of mystery. The Buddhist solves the problem by denying the hypothesis. He says

simply that all suffering is merited, and is due to guilt from sins committed in some other life, if not in this. If the Christian denies this, it is not satisfactory, even to himself, merely to give a *tu quoque* and say of the origin of suffering what the Buddhist does of the ultimate origin of existence, it is "unrevealed."

It would be a mistake to put the doctrine of the miraculous conception in the forefront of Christian teaching. While it is most fitting that the Christ should thus have been born, and the account of his birth is most beautiful, no cardinal truth of the gospel depends upon it. The question of Christ's divinity is not necessarily affected by the method of his birth. To Shan Buddhists, the incarnation of a Divine Being by the natural laws of generation would present no difficulties. The body only is produced, according to the Shans, by the natural laws of generation; the soul, or spirit, comes from above or below, as the case may be. The soul always comes "with trailing clouds of glory," or with the smell of smoke.

It may seem out of place to speak of "vicarious suffering" as awakening opposition after saying that the atonement has in it an unparalleled power of appeal. The reason is not far to seek. In Animistic-Buddhism there is deliverance from physical ills; but there is no place for forgiveness in the Christian sense. To such as cling tooth and nail to the doctrine of Karma, that every man is his own saviour or his own destroyer, that the sinner must pay his penalty to the last farthing, sooner or later, even though he gain a spirit abode first, the doctrine of forgiveness by the Cross is a stumbling-block and foolishness; but to such as are dissatisfied with the pound for pound doctrine of Karma, and long for a way of escape, the doctrine of forgiveness through the love of God, as revealed in the Cross, comes with a most powerful attraction.

The doctrine of a physical resurrection, like the doctrine of the miraculous conception, is not fundamental in the Christian faith. It is a fitting subject for Christians to discuss among themselves (and they have various opinions about it), but nothing can be gained by laying emphasis

upon it in addressing Shan Buddhists. There is at least one more peculiarity of the gospel message which, while it may not awaken opposition, is very perplexing to Buddhists—it gives a few comprehensive principles, but gives few rules; while Buddhism has its virtues, vices and punishments all numbered and labelled, five of this, ten of that, fifteen of another, and so on.

Real opposition is sometimes raised against the exclusive claim of Christianity, when dogmatically presented, that there is no salvation apart from knowledge and acceptance of the historic Christ, Jesus of Nazareth. The Shans freely admit that the teaching of the New Testament is good. For its ethical teaching in particular they have only words of praise. In fact, they often fail to see much difference between the teaching of the New Testament and that of their own Pitakat, the Law of Gautama. The writer once read the New Testament through with an educated Shan and he, though a devout Buddhist and well versed in the sacred writings of his own religion, declared that he liked it all. But to any and every suggestion that Christianity was better than Buddhism, or that there was no salvation outside of identification with Christianity, with its historic Christ, and with its creeds and its customs, he most strenuously objected. It may be confessed that some Christians sympathize with this intelligent Shan, and that too without for a moment conceding that Buddhism (or any other religion) equals their own in the soundness of its philosophy, in the greatness of its truths, or in the superabounding excellence of its ethics; neither would they compromise its authority, its universality, or its finality.

Objection is sometimes made to the Christian presupposition of one life, and one only, in which to work out one's eternal destiny. A few months ago, an intelligent young Shan, who had been educated for the priesthood but had left it to take a wife, asked me, with politeness and full sincerity, how it could be possible that any one could merit either eternal happiness or eternal misery as the result of the deeds of one brief life. The exact weights and measures of Buddhism seemed to him to give finally a more just and

more reasonable balance. He contended that an incomprehensible series of existences through an inconceivable space of time must be over-past to justify such a result. The intelligent and sincere Christian teacher must be prepared to meet such objections as these ; else he may find himself in the condition of Achilles with a vulnerable heel.

It is easy to show that there is no such even balance of justice in Buddhism. A man who has become immensely rich through the toil and sweat of others (for all wealth is produced by labour) makes an offering of eighteen monasteries, and as a reward becomes a king of kings through countless ages ; another takes the life of an insect, "squeezing it in the hand," and becomes a "black ghost" as a first step downward to the "copper cauldron of hell"—a hell in which he must boil for myriads of world cycles. And all this by a savage inexorable law, with which God has nothing to do. Ultra-Calvinism, which is said to have paved hell with the skulls of infants, was not more shocking or more unjust.

If the early Christians or the Roman Catholics borrowed anything from the Buddhists, it must have been this carnal and crass and crude and cruel doctrine of endless or practically endless and indescribably excruciating torture in hell. It was a good thing to lend. The Buddhists would have been wiser, but less generous, if they had lent it all. This is not intended to flatter the borrowers. Calvin said : "The wicked have the seeds of hell in their own hearts." Those words interpreted as the poet Whittier interprets them come nearer the true Christian teaching :

"The sweet persuasion of His voice  
Respects the sanctity of will ;  
He giveth day : thou hast thy choice  
To walk in darkness still.  
What if thine eye refuse to see,  
Thine ear of heaven's free welcome fail ;  
And thou a willing captive be,  
*Thyself thine own dark jail.*"

The poets were far ahead of many conservative theologians, but even the lamest and most belated of the latter have now made a sprint and caught up. The Christian explanation, delivered from all crass materialistic representation, that

heaven and hell are essentially states of the will, though it may not fathom the deep mystery, is an explanation that can more readily "justify the faith to the reason." The faith of Browning is certainly as sane as Buddhism, though it may be equally inexplicable :

" My hope is, a sun will pierce  
 The thickest cloud earth ever stretched ;  
 That, after Last, returns the First,  
 Though a wide compass round be fetched ;  
 That what began best, can't end worst,  
 Nor what God blest once, prove accurst."

One may believe with all one's heart that " the mind of God is working out the harmony of the Universe," and that " the harmony " will be a Song of Love, without being able to give the reason for the minor strains of the symphony.

Intelligent open-minded Christians cherish a generous spirit towards all that is good in Oriental religions, and give full credit for every truth and for every virtue they find. Even pure spirit-worship has elements of value : a certain sense of sin ; of dependence ; of accountability ; of spirit-powers beyond that exercise control ; of compensation for every deed. Yet in all charity it must be confessed that there is much also which is senseless or worse.

Of Buddhism a higher appreciation can be given. On the whole, whatever may be its errors and failures, it has had an enlightening and uplifting influence upon the Shans. It has tamed their wild spirit and given them a wider outlook upon religious life. Buddhism has an ethical code which is, as a Freemason once said of his Order : " A good thing, if lived up to." There is somewhat else to be said, not so handsome. A fair exchange is not robbery. I have permitted Shan Buddhists to raise objections against certain forms of Christian teaching (though they never find fault with the Gospel of Jesus). It will be only fair play now if I raise a few objections to the Shan form of Buddhism ; which may show that the excellence of its moral code may be exaggerated.

I object to his doctrine of transmigration. It tends to cheapen human life. In Shan courts of law a human life was valued at Rs. 300 and, before British occupation, a



murderer could buy his freedom for that sum. Robbery, with bloodshed, was astonishingly common, and that by Buddhists who were so kind that they would carefully pick out the vermin from their hair and clothes and lay the little creatures aside with all gentleness.\* I object to his doctrine of merit, as it now stands. While there is an element of truth and of value in it, it is carried so far that it fosters selfishness. Bowring states the case in stronger terms than I would; but let us have what he says; then the  
 \* Buddhists may find fault with him instead of with me :

"The real and invincible objection to Buddhism is its selfishness, its disregard of others, its deficiency in all the promptings of sympathy and benevolence. . . . A bonze (monk) seems to care nothing about the condition of those who surround him; he makes no effort for their elevation or improvement. He scarcely reproves their sins, or encourages their virtues; he is self-satisfied with his own superior holiness, and would not move his finger to remove any mass of human misery.†

"I further object to his utter ignoring the existence and authority of a personal God.‡ It deadens his sense of responsibility and accountability. It does not take it all

\* In speaking of the "Native Tracts" of China, Dr. Martin says: "We have exhortations to compassion for brute animals. The radical sentiment is just and praiseworthy, but the writers rush into extremes; and instead of nourishing a well-poised, active humanity to man, they make a merit of emancipating birds and fish, and of succouring ants that are struggling in the water. Under the influence of this literature, a society has been formed in Peking for the release of captive sparrows; but I have yet to hear that any society has been organized for the suppression of the sale of little children—a traffic which is openly carried on in all the cities of China."

With reference to the effect of this doctrine on the value of human life as appraised by the Burman Buddhists, Mr. Taw Sein Ko says: "They, indeed, have a great respect for animal life in general, and are very loath to crush even an insect or a vermin, but when stung by jealousy, hatred, malice, or rivalry in love-making, then their impulsive Burman nature seems to appear in bold relief. For, under such circumstances, it is generally the case that they most coolly waylay their unlucky victim and do not evince the slightest compunction in killing him with a *da* or crowbar."

† Bowring, *The Kingdom and People of Siam*, Vol. I, p. 297.

‡ "The beneficent influence of this religion (Buddhism) would have been much greater had it recognized the love and fear of God as the first of all virtues."—Edkins, *Chinese Buddhism*, p. 190.

away, for there is left the fear of the dread grip of impersonal irrevocable Law, Nature Force, Great-Pan, or whatever it may be called, as remorseless as Death and as changeless as Fate. I object to his pessimistic claim that all things are getting from bad to worse by an unchangeable 'constitution of things,' which tends to paralyze moral endeavour. It is impossible, he says, to keep a river from running down hill. When conditions are bad, fold the hands; it cannot be helped. I object to his background of impersonal power, which robs life of the comfort and uplift of true prayer, trusting in the All-Father to hear and answer. His half-fearful, half-trustful prayers to guardian spirits may take its place to some degree, but they are a poor substitute. I object to his passive pity, which falls far short of the active ministeries of Christian love. I would not be understood as saying that Shan Buddhism is wholly without active ministeries of sympathy and helpfulness, but they occupy a comparatively small place alike in the religious literature and in the religious life of the people. Good as Shan Animistic-Buddhism is, such defects as I have mentioned here show like warts on the fair face of its excellences. It is and ought to be the aim and purpose of Christianity to lift such needy races to a better social order, to a nobler religious life, 'to build the world's great altar stairs that lead through darkness up to God.'

"The contribution of Oriental to Occidental religious thought" is a current phrase and some of us would like to know what is meant by it. The West seems to have enough of philosophies, religious and otherwise, and of vagaries of all sorts as it is. There, there are -ologies without number: theology, cosmology, anthropology, demonology, and every other -ology imaginable; there, there are -isms in crowds: idealism, materialism, positivism, spiritism, simianism, and its sister science, sectarianism; and all are topped off with Christian Science, Vegetarianism, and the Simple Life. What more can be wanted either of the good or of the bad? It is a mistake to think that the East has surpassed the West in the subtilities of philosophical thought, in the depths of religious insight, or in the vagaries of the imagination. The contribu-

tion that Shan Animistic-Buddhism can furnish is exceedingly small. If more arrant superstition is required, it can supply that by the ship-load, and have so much left over that the contribution would not be missed. Even here little that is new can be given, and we have long been trying to get rid of the old.

There is one thing that Animistic-Buddhism may give of real value, and another thing that may help a little by way of emphasis. The first of these is reality in religious belief. As an instance of our need of this, we may take the doctrine of angels. In both the Hebrew and the Christian Scriptures, this doctrine has an important place. But to-day belief in angels is shadowy and unreal. In standard works of theology the doctrine is dismissed with a few pages, and in the hymns of the Christian Church to find a prayer for their aid and protection is very rare. While of the Shans it may be said that belief in spirits, which correspond to angels, is as real as belief in the existence of the first man or woman they meet on the street. Either the one or the other of two things ought to be done: the doctrine should honestly be confessed to be of no importance, or else it should have full and adequate recognition. A similar thing may be said of belief in God. Jehovah was very real to David when he wrote the twenty-third Psalm. The Father was very real to Jesus when he lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me." Equally real is the Father to many devout Christians; and yet it must be confessed that metaphysical speculation has in recent years tended to relegate belief in God to the limbo of philosophical and iridescent dreams. This stands in unhappy contrast with the childlike faith of many converts to Christianity from these unschooled peoples of the East. To them belief in spirits and the spirit world was real, and, after conversion, God became to them the one great reality, Supreme above all spirits and all worlds. No faith could be more beautifully childlike than that of a convert who said, "I cannot pray as the missionaries do,—I simply ask God for what I want."

Now, a word as to the thing which may help a little by way of emphasis. The ethics of Buddhism, however high and noble it may have been in original Buddhism, leaves

much to be desired as it reappears in the Shan writings. Still, it may be generously admitted that these writings, on the whole, emphasize the truth that the largest dividends in this life, and in all lives, come from right living. The doctrine of Karma, whatever may be said against it, does lay stress on character. This doctrine may never have any preceptible influence over the theology of the West, but that it will have over the theology of the coming Christianity of the East is scarcely open to doubt, just as Greek philosophy influenced Christian thinking in the Roman Empire. Apart from the supposition of transmigration, there is in it a truth of inestimable value. It can never take the place of the atonement, but it may help in laying more emphasis on the atonement as a process, rather than as a far-spent event—on the atonement as a moral quality into which all should enter and of which they should become a part. Salvation comes by entering into the Life of Christ. He not only lived, and loved, and died for me ; he taught me how to live, and love, and die. As Henry Drummond says, “ the sacrifice of Christ is a part of the very essence of Christianity, but the basis of Christianity is the eternal love of God.”\* The very essence of the Christianity of to-day should consist in the perpetuation of that self-sacrificing love.

In laying stress on character Buddhism has done well ; that Buddhist peoples have failed to realize more fully their ideal is due to defects in the religious basis upon which their morality rests. Just how weak and shaky the religious foundation is may be seen from the judgment of such well-known experts as these :

Sir Monier Williams says, “ Buddhism has no creator, no creation, no original germ of things, no soul of the world, no personal, no impersonal, no supermundane, no antemundane principle.” And Professor Rhys Davids, in *Buddhism and Christianity*, makes this statement: “ In Buddhism, we have an ethical system, but no law-giver ; a world without a creator, a salvation without eternal life, and a sense of evil, but no conception of pardon, atonement, reconciliation, or redemption.”†

\* See *Life of Henry Drummond*, p. 335.

† Quoted in *Lore of Cathay*, p. 262.

So slender is the distinctively religious base of Buddhism that a recent writer has said: "Buddhism as given to the world by Gautama Buddha was not a religion, but a philosophy in revolt against certain teachings and ceremonies of Brahminism."\*

This last statement may be true of Buddhism "as given to the world," but it would err by excess as applied to the Animistic-Buddhism of the Shans. Moreover it is hard to see wherein any form of Buddhism is more philosophical than Christianity: the one presupposes Nature-Forces, Change, Unreality of the Ego, Moral Law (as bound up in the constitution of things), etc.; the other presupposes God, Creation, Personality (Individuality), Moral Law (as an expression of God's will), etc. That there is a philosophical element in Buddhism that has not a counterpart in Christianity, a corresponding or a contrary philosophical presupposition, is somewhat doubtful. The statement that Buddhism as originally given to the world was not a religion is surprising—but let that go; we are not here concerned with original Buddhism, but with the Buddhism of the Shans of these hills, Buddhism as it is thought, and lived, and expressed by this people to-day.

That this obvious and ostentatious thing is a religion, however frail,† does not seem to be open to doubt on any side or at any angle.

\* H. H. Tilbe, Ph.D.

† In this religious frailty there is a warning: A nation may flourish for a time on ethical codes, psychological theories, and philosophical dreams; but no nation ever became really and permanently great without an exalted and exalting religion. Religion supplies the motive power, the *dynamic*, that makes moral systems vigorous and effective. The mighty nations of the West owe their greatest debt not to inventors of "dreadnoughts," but to the sage of Judea.

In the leading magazine of Japan (*Taiyo*), Dr. Ukita of the Waseda University says: "Our people have been under the influence of the teachings of Buddha and Confucius for ages, and have gotten full of the ideas of rank. Woman is despised; the common people and the poor are not considered. . . . The spirit of benevolence and pity has not gained acceptance among us. . . . Christianity teaches there is a God of love, and that He made man in His own image. If we lose sight of these truths, how can we make progress in the essential elements of civilization? . . . I firmly believe it necessary to look to Christianity to supply these needed elements."—Quoted from *Record of Christian Work*, December 1913, p. 817.

Many years ago, the writer was in a small Shan village near Bhamo distributing Christian literature and trying to explain, as best he could, what the new teaching taught. In the group of people there was an old gray-haired woman, humble, devout, a mother in her Israel. When the talk was talked out, she said: "I am a woman. I don't know anything. I only know that God is in heaven and that he is good." That was not philosophy, it was religion, a faith that may have overstepped the outmost reaches of the original article. Philosophy is largely intellectual; the Buddhism of the Shans is not. The Shan writers, though they had an astounding exuberance of words, were not thinkers. However deeply thoughtful the original may have been, it comes out when they are done with it, as thin and watery as that diluted bovine beverage dudh-wallas sell for milk; religion is largely a matter of the will and of the emotions—the Buddhism of the Shans is that in full measure. It would be difficult to frame a definition of religion (outside of the various forms of monotheism) which would exclude the Animistic-Buddhism of the Shans. Let us try a definition or two already framed. Dictionaries put it this way: . . . "a system of faith and worship"; "a manifestation of piety"; "as . . . the religion of idol worshippers" (Webster). Shan Buddhism comes in there all right. Now let us try the theologians: The original meaning of religion is "reverent observance" (of duties to the gods) (Strong); religion is "a kind of knowing" (Hegel); religion is "the feeling of dependence" (Schleiermacher); religion is "morality or moral action" (Kant). Buddhism comes in there all right too, and it is only in specific definitions of the Christian religion (or some other form of monotheism) that it is ruled out.

Let us see now—while we are at it—how it is that the Shans come to have religious thoughts, and religious purposes, and religious feelings. They were born with all these possibilities and appetencies to start in with. Then there are religious influences from their earliest years. They see or hear about the lofty pagodas; the large and often costly monasteries; the yellow-robed monks, with the people bowing down and saying, "lord, lord"; hear

religious books read; hear monks reciting pious texts; attend religious festivals and become a part of the show themselves. They live from the start in an atmosphere of religiosity to say the least of it. Right here in town, a short time ago, a large number of boys were put into the monasteries as novitiates or probationers, with the customary show which would have dazzled the eyes of a Barnum. They were paraded up and down the streets like little gods—and naturally for the time being they thought they were—though they may have been tired and cried for their suppers when it was all over. This was not philosophy; it was not even a system of ethics; it was an appeal to the religious imagination, and little else. “A manifestation of piety”? Yes, it was that. “Reverent observance”? It was that. “The religion of idol worshippers”? It was not very far off. Religious feeling was connected with it all. But there are those who say that no form of worship is a religion unless the object thereof is a God. Has Shan Buddhism a God to worship? Yes, Gautama the Buddha, the Apotheosized, to whom infinite wisdom is attributed, an attribute of deity. Shan Buddhism is more largely a religion than a philosophy.

Certain admirers of Buddhism have mistakenly claimed that it is more “scientific” than Christianity. Even if it were, that would not necessarily add to its value as a religion; for science, as Professor Drummond says, “has failed to discover any clue to the ultimate mystery of origins, any clue which can compete for a moment with the view of theology. . . . Science has not found a substitute for God. . . . It has seen plainly that atheism is unscientific. . . . It is certain that every step of science discloses the attributes of the Almighty with a growing magnificence.”\* The scientific man must either begin or end with the first line of *Genesis* or leave his science incomplete. Herein Buddhism is not more but less scientific than Christianity.†

\* *Life of Henry Drummond*, p. 231.

† H. Hackmann says: “Everybody who studies it (Buddhism) more closely will soon notice that its most fundamental ‘truths’ (metempsychosis, the law of retribution, the pessimistic view of life, the eight-fold path leading to salvation) have nothing to do with science, but are mere assumptions or beliefs. Mankind longs for a religion that gives positive hope, that helps . . . to grasp a little at least of the deep and hidden sense of the universe.—*The Chinese Recorder*, December 1910, p. 780.

What estimate shall be made of the moral character of the Buddhist priesthood? What is the value of this religious (or, if you please, philosophical) order to the State through its influence upon the people? Probably no two men would give exactly the same answer to this question. That it is a question of prime importance none can doubt. In the Shan States, all Christians, whether British officers or not, give the Buddhist monks credit for being sincere in purpose, pure in mind and habits, more or less industrious in teaching the boys of their respective neighbourhoods, of being, in short, a positive influence for good. They may smile at the obtrusive egotism and supercilious airs of some of the monks, but they respect them as a class and speak highly of them. On the whole, this estimate is merited. It is higher, however, than that sometimes given by the Shans themselves. The Shan proverb, "When there is a Winè in the village, the monks are detested," has been quoted. The meaning of the proverb is manifest: the conduct of the monks falls below the requirements. Since some of the rules are irksome and nonsensical, it can be no great offence if they are honoured in the breach rather than in the observance. But there are many other of the rules that are wise and wholesome. If the proverb refers to the breaking of these as well, it may be that Christians have given a too generous estimate. Many pages of the *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States* were devoted to a discussion of the attitude of the monks to British rule. It is there shown that nearly every, if not every, serious uprising against the British Government was concocted in some monastery, and that the leaders of dacoit or robber bands were not infrequently Buddhist monks. The plea has sometimes been made that these monks were actuated by sentiments of religion and of patriotism, wrongly surmising that the British Government were inimical to the Buddhist religion. If such bands had refrained from robbing and killing their own people, this plea might stand. Still, it seems strange that monasteries, rather than courts of justice or private dwellings, were the favourite haunts of these scheming scoundrels. Too much ought not to be made of such



incidents, for monks of that sort always were in an almost negligible minority. The vast majority of the monks never took part in acts so utterly opposed to the rules and spirit of their order.

It is certainly true that the Shan monks of eastern Burma, who have come under strong Burman Buddhist influence, are of a higher moral class than the Buddhist monks of western China, Siam, or Cambodia. Some at least of the monks of western China are of the Poi-kyaung or the Kōng-long sects, and smoke opium, trade, practise medicine, and, in short, do most everything that "men of the world" do, except the keeping of wives in public. The Shans themselves report that one or two of the minor sects of northern Siam are permitted to keep concubines, provided the latter do not sleep in the monasteries.

Mr. Colquhoun, after filling a full page in mentioning various offences, sums up thus: "The poongyees (monks) are supposed to supply the educational wants of the people; but, as a matter of fact, they do nothing of the kind. They are merely teachers, by their example, of apathy, laziness, and downright vice" (p. 148). This indictment may be just so far as the monks of Siam are or were concerned, but it is by far too drastic to apply to the monks of eastern Burma. One may not, ought not, to call the Shan monks, as a class, either vicious or lazy. Celibacy has been to the monks a pitfall of danger; but as they may throw off the yellow robe at any time and marry (as many of them do), they have an open door to freedom, without bringing disgrace upon their order.

Mr. Colquhoun makes this wise observation: "It is important when judging of the habits and morals of a people to consider what influence the example and training of their schoolmasters have had upon them." He claims that even in Burma, where the monks are far more strict in their observance of their rules than they are in Siam, that the boys who are taught in the monastic schools are less industrious and less moral than their sisters, who get their training from their mothers at home. He goes much further and declares that the education received in monastic schools,

even if carried out in the full spirit of the precepts, is not invigorating either to mind or body, and that many years passed in such seminaries must tend to develop a taste for apathy and indolence.

Take it altogether this is not a very hopeful account of the influence of monastic schools upon the boys who attend them and through the boys, in growing up, upon the people at large. But in one respect at least there is a brighter side. The example of the monks, as a whole, in these Shan states, is far better. While it is true that the education given, even at its best, is not invigorating, at least a few fine moral precepts are instilled into the minds of the young—mixed up, of course, with much that is mythical, fantastic and utterly absurd. Apart from these precepts, however, there is nothing in the instruction given which can by any possibility be helpful in the practical affairs of life; except that the boys learn to read and write, or may, if they stay in the monastic schools long enough, and do not spend too much of their time in play in the monastery yards. Just how impractical the education given is may be seen from such little things as this: Some of the best educated (who do not remain in monkhood) become writers and earn their living by copying books to be sold to others who may wish to make offerings. The date on which the copying is completed is ordinarily put at the end of the manuscript. The year may be 1254 (B.E.). The chances are even that it is written in this fashion, 1200504. And that by professional writers who were once the most advanced boys in the whole school.

Within recent years a few of these schools have become registered under the Education Department of Burma. In these schools the monks, in so far as they are able and willing, are supposed to follow the prescribed studies. Gradually the instruction in monastic schools may be improved. It will take a long time, for comparatively few of the monks care to have their schools registered and meet the requirements—it interferes too much, they are wont to say, with their hours for meditation. The excuse in many instances may be sincere; they may also

find it irksome to conform to regular hours of teaching; and may feel it to be derogatory to their exalted position to be bound down to secular rules.

Unfortunately, at the present time, many monks look upon a confrère who has his monastic school registered with disfavour. They are conservative, like other well meaning people, and naturally discountenance any new method that breaks in upon long established custom. There is a monk in Hsipaw, one of the northern Shan states, who by his interest and diligence built up an efficient registered school. The Government, wishing to show publicly their appreciation and to stimulate other good monks to do the same, had a meeting called at the palace of the chief to reverently bestow upon him a robe and a diploma of honour. The Superintendent, the highest British officer of the region, presided and after making an excellent speech, persuasively declaring the deep and sincere piety of the British Government, their great concern for the religious well-being of their subjects, their non-interference and absolute impartiality in all matters pertaining to the gods, and emphasizing the benefits to be derived from a practical education, publicly commended the monk for his notable success and gave him the tokens of the Government's appreciation. He was duly grateful, but his fellow monks, by the score in the state, were conspicuous for their absence. Even some of the people murmured that it was not fair to pick out and honour one monk among so many. The intentions of the Government were most excellent, but the Shan Buddhists have not yet attained to their exalted position in the matter of education at least, whatever may or may not be true of their piety. It may be said, however, that a few of the Shans have come to see that monastic instruction, with its ancient tales of holy hermits, celestial spirits, earthly biloes, and salacious warnings to templed monks even when interlarded with pious precepts, is not sufficient for these changing times.

Better things may be expected. The enlightened chief of Hsipaw, a short time ago, issued a letter of information giving notice that it was his wish that all children of his

state should be sent to school and kept there long enough to receive sufficient instruction and training to be of real benefit to them in after years as members of the state. This is remarkable as being probably the first instance of the kind in the history of the Shans of Burma. But the real hope of these Shans, though they may not know it, is in the Christian Government under whom and under which they live. Christian? Yes, assuredly. It is seen in their high and generous purposes; in the moral character they demand in public servants; in the justice and honour of their courts; in their unselfish interest in the welfare of all the people, without regard to social rank or industrial condition; in liberal and efficient superintendence of education; in the emphasis laid on ethical values rather than on monetary advantage; in every way leading through the whole wide range of national well-being.

An instance of it may be found in the school text-books. In the English and vernacular readers used in registered schools between the first and the seventh standards (to say nothing of schools of higher grade) more invigorating moral lessons are taught than can be found in the hundreds of Shan religious books taken together. The monkish writers, looking out upon life from the narrow windows of their monasteries and too often from the point of view of their own personal interests, caught few glimpses of the finer qualities of loyalty and unselfishness and abiding affection and pure social ideals, which glorify humanity and make life worth living. One searches in their books, and searches almost in vain, for lessons on the dignity of manual labour, on honesty and thrift, on love of justice and hatred of injustice, on self-sacrifice for the social welfare, on devotion to one's country, on obedience to rightfully constituted authority, or on any of the traits of character that are indispensable in the upbuilding of a decent state.

Educationists who are fatuously looking to improved monastic training of the young for the ideal union of secular and religious education, for instilling into youthful minds the great ethical principles that make for fair play, for the square deal, for the righteousness that exalteth a

nation, are doomed to a miserable disappointment. The condition of Burma before British domination and of all Buddhist countries that remain unaffected by the Christian standard of morality is patent proof of it.

Lessons on service; lessons on sympathy; lessons on co-operation; lessons on brotherhood—and many other such lessons are certainly important; but where are they? There are a few lessons on obedience and reverence for parents and teachers, but scarcely for kings and other rulers who are called the “enemies” (of the individual and of society). This last may explain, to some extent, why insurrectionary chickens have usually been hatched in a monastery. Schools, under the auspices of the Government, are lifting the people alike in moral ideals and in material efficiency. The Government is a Christian institution with direct and determinative relations to Animistic-Buddhism. And, as a Burman in the Shan States said a few years ago, “It is coming; we can’t stop it.” Thus endeth the first lesson.

If there be any honour in old age, the Shans may claim that honour at least. They were apparently numerous and widely spread before Abraham went forth from Ur of the Chaldees, and, if Chinese legendary history can be trusted, had kings and emperors before baby Moses cried in his little cradle among the flags by the river’s brink. Now, with the exception of the Siamese, they are all—from eighteen to twenty million of them—under alien rule (Chinese, French and British), with one and a quarter million under the last-mentioned government. Assumption of authority spells responsibility. For their elevation, a missionary with a Bible under his arm ought to be and is a good thing in its way; but the mission of this Christian Government, and of Christianity, is something larger, aiming at the uplift and advancement of the people in industrial, social, national, and moral welfare, in giving a much-needed and mighty boost.

THE END.



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